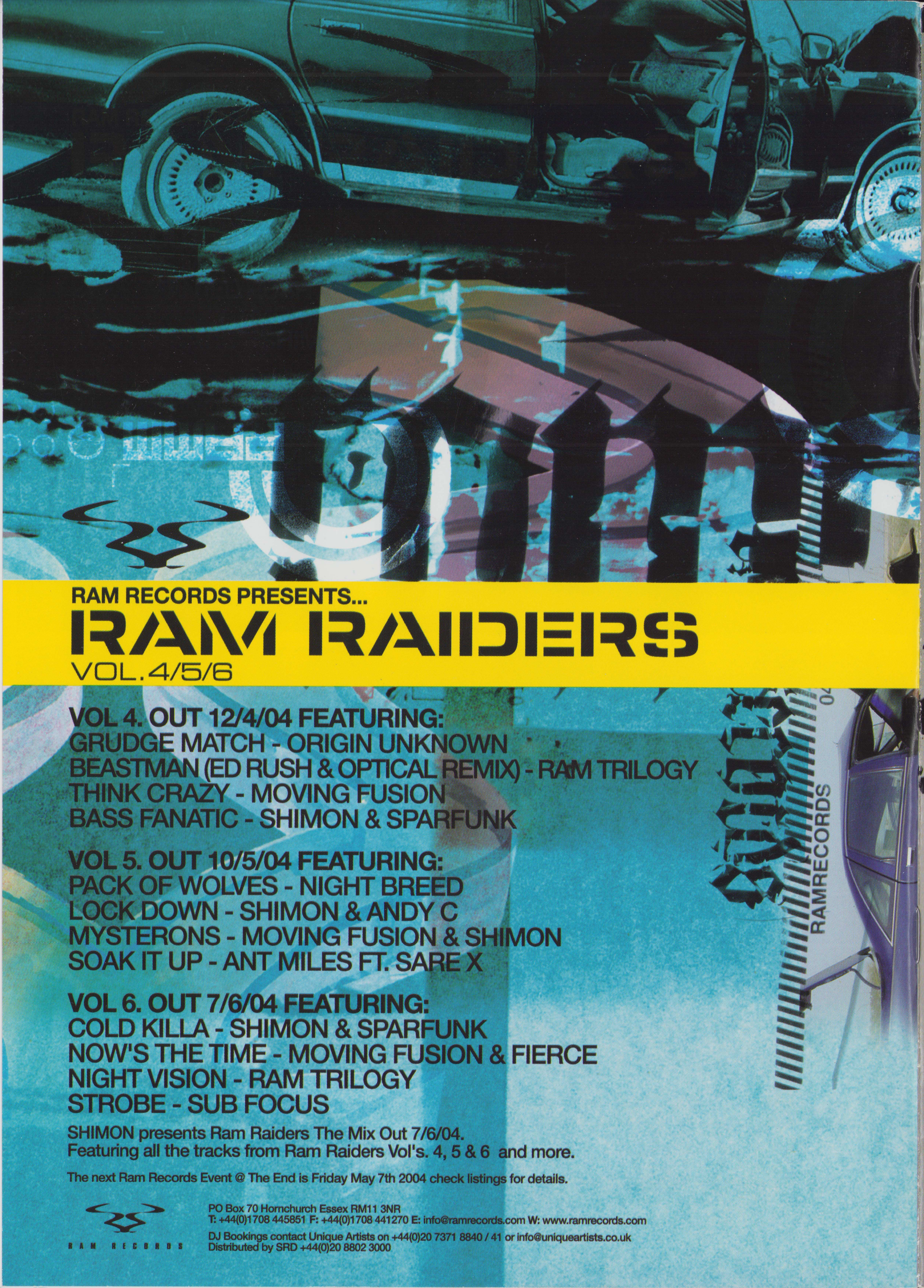

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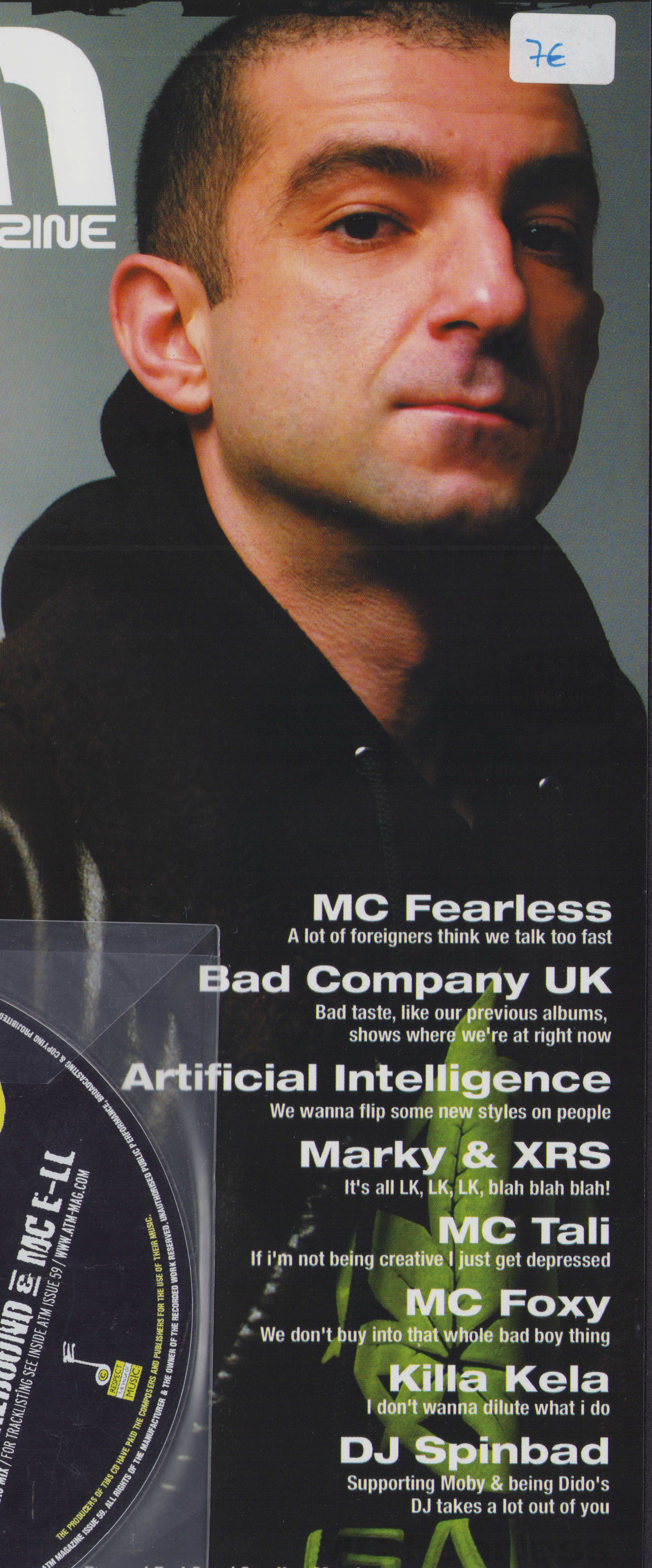

MC Fearless
A lot of foreigners think we talk too fast

Bad Company UK
Bad taste, like our previous albums, shows where we're at right now

Artificial Intelligence
We wanna flip some new styles on people

Marky & XRS
It's all LK, LK, LK, blah blah blah!

MC Tali
If i'm not being creative I just get depressed

MC Foxy
We don't buy into that whole bad boy thing

Killa Kela
I don't wanna dilute what i do

DJ Spinbad
Supporting Moby & being Dido's DJ takes a lot out of you

Baron / Red One / Swollen Members
/ London Elektricity / Commix / Gridlok
Balance / Skyver & DJon / Kontrol / Cyantific
Graff, Records, Clubs, Equipment & Games Reviews

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FEATURES

019. Artificial Intelligence
020. MC Foxy
024. Leaders of the Nu Skool
Gridlok, Skyver & DJon, Commix, Nu Balance, Kontrol, Cyantific.
029. Red One
031. Baron
034. Bad Company UK
041. Swollen Members
042. DJ Hype
046. MC Tali
054. MC Fearless
056. Marky & XRS
078. DJ Spinbad
082. Killa Kela

THE MUSIC

032. Charts
088. Studio Tips : Bulletproof
048. Equipped
059. D.I.T.C: London Elektricity
067. All Star Reviews
068. Drum & Bass Reviews
074. Beatz Reviews
075. Hip Hop Reviews
076. Albums

AND THEN SOME

007. Whas Up
014. Working Class Heroes
016. Cover CD: Futurebound & MC E-LL
017. Competitions
036. Threadz
060. Where It's @
073. Games Reviews
080. Subscriptions
081. Who Shot Ya

ATM issuefiftynine

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the word on the street

DIESEL-U-MUSIC 2004

Upon us once more is the national search for new music talent with Diesel-U-Music 2004 launching this month. Now in its fourth year Diesel-U-Music is well established as the UK's most important organisation supporting unsigned artists and promoting music at grass roots level. The organisation has incredible backing from some of the UK's most respected labels and publications, creating a partnership that boasts enormous support to Britain's new musical talents. The partners include ATM, DJ Magazine, Jockey Slut, Music Managers Forum, NME, Wall Of Sound and Vital amongst a host of others. Diesel-U-Music offers aspiring new talents the opportunity to work with the likes of these publications, gaining ongoing support and guidance from some of the countries key industry professionals. The winners receive ultimate accolades ranging from performing at the Diesel-U-Music awards, other UK and international events, label releases, studio time and media exposure. With the success stories of previous winners DJ Yoda, DJ Skully, Magikstar and Tom Vek, this is an opportunity not to be missed.
The categories this year include urban, dance, electronic and indie-rock. To enter, entrants can submit their demos to Diesel-U-Music, 55 Argyle St, London, WC1H 8EE. The closing date is April 30th. For all the rules to enter and other information check www.diesel-u-music.com or pick up an entry form in any Diesel store.

INFRARED

After a great year for Infrared's main man J Majik and new recruits Wickaman and Cookie Monsters they are set to cause the same amount of chaos in 2004. Majik's long awaited "Play The Game" should be out now along with "Rolf Harris" by TKO, closely followed by another collaboration with Gil Felix entitled "Me Lever". Then in April, long time soldier Probe joins forces with Sylo for their debut on Infrared with "Battle Royale" and "Spark Plug". Following on from that J Majik then hits us with an EP featuring amongst others, the massive "Scooby Doo". No letting up in May when a 12" from Futurebound and an EP from Wickaman appears and then June sees Majik join forces once again with the inimitable Kathy Brown for "Rage".
Elsewhere, Infrared have joined forces with Ganja Records for "Dubplate Killa" due out around April. Also, Defected have another release from Majik, this time with Terra Diva for "Watch You". As well as all of that, the vocal bomb from J Majik featuring MC MC "Straight For The Door" is out soon and the associated Viper Recordings drops its second release in the shape of "Fleshwound". So, the pace is far from slowing down in 2004 for Infrared.

METALHEADZ

Although last year things were fairly quiet for the Metalheadz crew, things started hotting up towards the end and continue to do so well into 2004. Throughout the year there is looking to be a steady stream of releases from both Metalheadz, Razors Edge and the new sister label, Metalheadz platinum. You can expect EP's from the likes of Spirit, Danny C, Calyx and Opus 1.2 on Metalheadz. Loxy and Ink return with a new remix of Angel on Razors Edge and on Metalheadz Platinum there will be offerings from both Bad Company and Total Science.
Also, planned for later in the year is an intriguing "Talking Headz" style DVD, which will no doubt be full of new material, artist interviews and the future of Headz. For more information on this check out the new and fully functional website on www.metalheadz.co.uk.

THE RETURN TO V

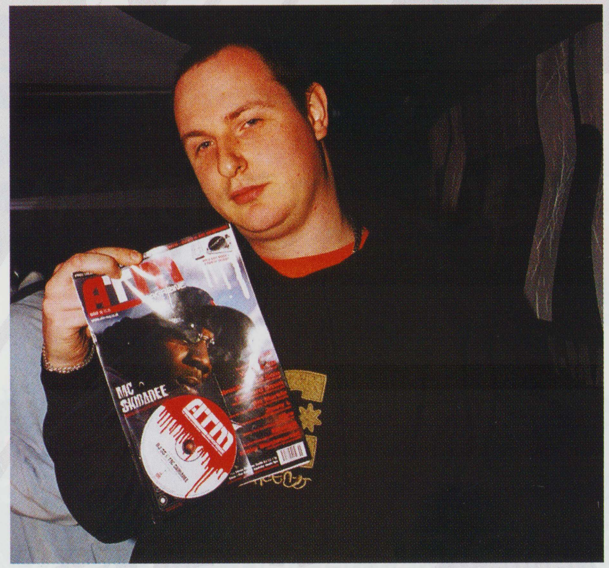
It was over ten years ago that Roni Size released his first EP "Made To Fit" on Bryan Gee's V Recordings. To celebrate the collaboration of one of dnb's baddest labels and most prolific producers, Planet V presents "Return To V"; a collection of brand new dancefloor tracks to be released later this spring mixed by Roni. The album will be highly anticipated with guest vocals by Fallacy, Sweetie Irie, Rodney P, Wilks, Stamina and Vikter Duplaix. As well as the new album on V, expect big things from the new sister label "Liquid V", which will cater for the more soulful end of the Drum & Bass spectrum, with forthcoming releases from Calibre, Artificial Intelligence, Commix and more.

OUTBREAK / TECHNICAL FREAKS

As Outbreak heads towards the big 3 0, there is no sign of slowing down with a four piece vinyl set split into two parts on offer. The first album; "Biological Warfare" contains four original tracks by Loxy and Keaton, Resonant Evil, Counterstrike and Future Prophecies. On the second double pack, there will be remixes from the likes of the mighty Friction, Tech-Itch, Raiden and Dylan. Plus, there will be an extra mix CD by Tech Itch containing nuff new tunes and early Outbreak releases. As well as all that 2 EP's will be out very soon from Raiden with the heavy tracks 'Bare Knuckle Fight' and 'Psycho' and from Evol Intent, 'Redsoil' and 'Deathrow'. With the album out in April, its all good. As if this wasn't enough already, the pairing of Dylan and Tech Itch for the album project 'Technical Freaks' is ever looming. Due for release in May the album looks set for big things. Onboard you can catch tracks from the likes of C4C, Concord Dawn, Paradox, Kryptic Minds, BC UK, B Key & Loxy and of course Dylan and Tech Itch. Expect vinyl and CD release and possibly a DVD, and you know the latter will cause nuff jokes! Don't forget you can catch the crew doing their thang every month at their Therapy Sessions night at Herbal.

SHOGUN RECORDINGS

With plenty of releases already under his belt on more labels than a stick could be shaken at, Friction has decided to set up his own label. This is going to be concentrating on his own tracks with possibly



THE OUTFIT

After a number of releases on Frontline, Nottingham boys The Outfit have releases scheduled on Hospital and 'Liquid V' in early 2004 and will be hitting the live scene hard in coming months, so keep a look out for them.

KRYPTIC MINDS

Essex boys Leon Switch and Kryptic Minds have been hard at work. They have the 7th and 8th releases due on their own Defcom imprint 'Blue Print' (Tech Itch remix) backed with 'Mutants' and 'I Remember' b/w 'Black Rain' respectively. They've also been putting in some hours for projects on Metalheadz under the alias Opus 1.2. For further info check defcomrecords.co.uk

JUNGLE DRUMMER

Jungle Drummer looks to have a hectic schedule this year, having just completed work on Killa Kela's new album, as well as looking to produce his own EP with an array of hip-hop and dnb producers. He is continuing his touring with the likes of Rodney P, London Elektricity and L Double, another busy man who has releases coming out on Flex Records, and is himself, touring extensively with live dates and gigs for 1xtra. Check flexrecords.co.uk for more.

UNCUT ARE BACK!!

For the last six months the sublime urban group have been relatively quiet, working on their own solo projects and taking a well earned break from their hectic tour and the release of the album "The Uncalculated Some". But we can now marvel once more at the sultry and delectable voice of Jenna G with the release of the "Chinese Silk" remixes. Calibre, ever present in 2003 and no doubt even more so in 2004 has blessed dance floors with a moving and upbeat remix of the track. Along with a heavier remix from Future Cut the single is out now.

DIESELBOY

Philly's mighty Dieselboy and the Human imprint are keeping busy. The 'Moonraker' / 'Studio 54' and 'Barrier Break' / 'Submission' 12's are in your stores now. Then comes the 'Extreme steel EP' from KC. Then in May we see the release of DSL's new mix CD for Human - sure to be large!!

BLACK SUN EMPIRE

Dutch beatmeisters Black Sun Empire are about to drop their debut LP 'Driving Insane', this hits the streets in real soon and comes on 4 piece vinyl or double CD. To support this there will be a tour touching down in Europe and later this year America & New Zealand. Check out blacksunempire.com for more.

EASY / DJ PHANTASY

With new signing Shodan in tow the release schedule for Easy looks about ready to burst! 'Atomic Age' and the Fatman D laced 'No Liar' is on vinyl now, along with Digital's 'Whip' and MC CD's debut 'Let Dem 'Ave It'. Forthcoming you can expect tracks from Probe, along with plenty more from Phantasy & Shodan. They have also been on the scout picking up new artists along the way. Expect rich pickings from some upcoming New Zealand guys aswell as DJ Escher. If all this wasn't enough Phantasy, Shodan & UK Apache's 'Gimme Da Girl' has just been signed to Hype's Ganja imprint.
Easy's club brand - Devotion have been sowing some serious seeds too over the last few months, securing monthlies at the likes of London's Coronet which will see £10 events in May, July, Sept and November. Brighton's Solid Ground and

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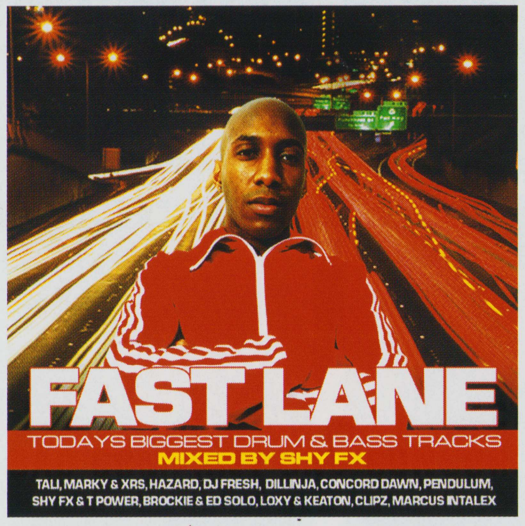
OUT 26TH APRIL 2004 - DJ FRIENDLY 5 PIECE VINYL 25 TRACK CD (INC. BONUS DVD)

ALBUM LAUNCH PARTY - FRIDAY APRIL 2ND @ THE END
LOXY / DJ INK / FRICTION / KEATON / DIESELBOY (USA) / DYLAN
PENDULUM / CONCORD DAWN / MILITIA / UNIVERSAL PROJECT
MC'S: RAGE / 2SHY / AD / VERSE / SP
9PM - 6AM / ADVANCE TICKETS £12 VIA TICKETWEB: 08700 600 100 / ON THE DOOR: £10 B4 10PM / £14 THEREAFTER / £12 NUS



TROUBLE ON VINYL PRESENTS
FAST LANE
MIXED BY SHY FX
FEAT TRACKS BY CLIPZ, MARKY & XRS, BROCKIE & ED SOLO
HAZARD, DJ FRESH, DILLINJA, CONCORD DAWN, PENDULUM
SHY FX & T POWER, LOXY & KEATON, TALI, MARCUS INTALEX
OUT 5TH APRIL 2004

ALBUM LAUNCH PARTY - SATURDAY 24TH APRIL @ CORONET
SHY FX (90 MIN SET) / ANDY C / ZINC B2B FRICTION / CLIPZ B2B HAZARD
BROCKIE / SIMON BASSLINE B2B DRUMSOUND / BARON / DJ WILDCHILD
MC'S: SKIBADEE & SHABBA D (SAS SPECIAL) / IC3 / FOXY / EKSMAN / FEARLESS / J-SWIF
9PM - 6AM / ADVANCE TICKETS £16 + BF FROM TICKETWEB: 08700 600 100 / INFO: WWW.TOVMUSIC.COM / 0777 330 7799

some out-of-camp collaborations thrown in for good measure. The first release is an absolute stormer, alongside ATM's own Frenzic, Jo's jungle classic 'R-Type' has been re-touched for the millenium, keeping all the parts that made the original what it is intact. Flip for the much in-demand original. With this as a first release you can be sure to expect big things from this label in the future.

TRUE PLAYAZ

This camp are slamming it right now with releases coming out all over the shop. First up, here's the True Playaz info, Zinc's remix of the tearer "Ska" is out now. Following this is the 'Extended Playaz EP' which features Friction & Nu Balance's follow-up to "Robocop", "Bogeyman", Hive's "Last Call", "Hazard's "Imagination" and Potential Bad Boy's long-awaited return to the scene with "1,2,3 Go". In May Pascal drops 'Playaz Lounge Vol 1 EP' which features amongst others the Moving Fusion remix of 'P-Funk', a month later Pascal will be at the controls for 'True Playaz In The Mix Volume 3' CD. And in September they will be dropping an as-yet-untitled album featuring tracks from camp members and beyond. Onto Ganja now, a major player from back in the early nineties Potential Bad Boy makes his mark in April with the 'Play it, Kick it EP', followed in May by Hazard's 'Get The Fuck Up' / 'Wonkey Donkey' 12", and Phantasy, Shodan and UK Apache's debut on the label with 'Gimme Da Gal'. In June they drop the big one! The 'Dubplate Killers LP', this features Majistrate's remix of Hype's 'Foundation', and 'Enuff is Enuff' VIP by Hype to name but two. The CD will feature 16 past present and future tracks in the mix, the new tracks from this project will be released on EP's shortly after. Things certainly look to be hotting up for this camp over the coming months, you can catch head honcho Hype touring Japan in April, Scandinavia in May and Australia and New Zealand in June. Check the Playaz website where you'll be able to obtain your very own @playaz-mail.com email address. Don't forget to check the baddest night in London, True Playaz' last Friday of the month slamdown at Fabric.

GOOD LOOKING IS LOOKING GOOD

The mighty LTJ Bukem's label Good Looking continues to thrive with the launch of the fourth imprint under the GLO guise with the deep house sounds of Deep Rooted. The full launch was last month and came with two new tracks courtesy of PFM and Bel-Pull Productions. February continued to get busy with the release of the new Studio X-2 album on Good Looking. Combining some classic releases with remixes by some top producers including Carlito and John B this is a winner. Then this month, being re-released are the wicked Good Looking tunes "The Western" and "One And Only". "Planet Saturn" featuring Drumsound and the mighty Simon Bassline Smith; the current Good Looking release is still doing well, so the next one, a double whammy from Vice Versa is one to watch out for, due out in April.

The Earth series continues to gain in popularity and with the new volume 7 coming out on April 26th along with an added DVD, no doubt this will be as sought after as the rest. Also out in May are more releases on Deep Rooted, a Cookin Records EP and more vinyl from Good Looking. As well as all of the releases Bukem has been busy with his crew doing a small tour of the UK along with the monthly residency in London. Next on the agenda is a huge tour of the US in April, which will no doubt be sick.

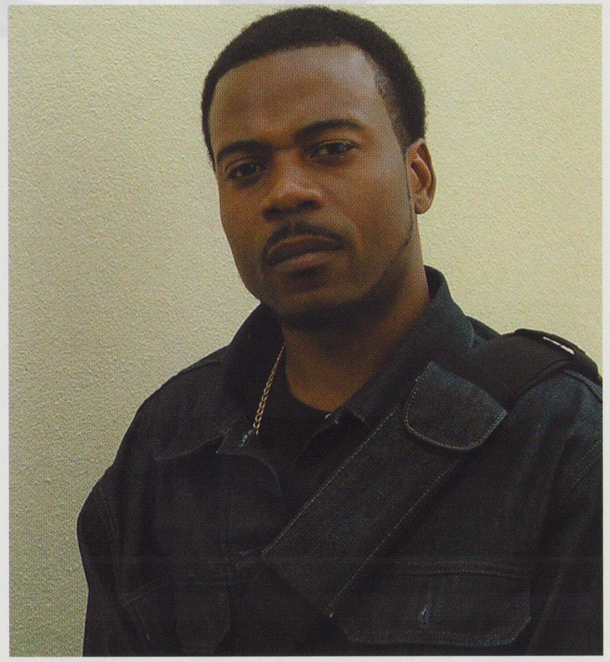
Bukem's family are certainly on the pulse right now and to keep up with all the goings on check out the new website, which is launching at the beginning of April. Just about everything you want to know about Good Looking will be on there, so if you're planning it as your chosen subject on Mastermind you'd better get on it.

FORMATION RECORDS

A hectic year has already begun for the Formation family, with the eagerly awaited S-Files LP surfacing amongst a flurry of releases from 'Generation Dub', with their dancefloor driven 'Deliverance EP' and a meaty Reformed Recordings #8 'Atomic' / 'Freakshow'. A Reform release 'After Party' & 'Time Crisis' from Zen and the return of 'Sénor John B' with his re-workings of 2 classics 'Pressure 2004' and 'Sight Beyond 2004'. Also a warm welcome back, to a future super star of Drum & Bass 'Influx UK' – Gavin graces us with two hotties to get the ball rolling on 'Ghost People (Take My 2004)' and 'Ghetto Messiah' followed by an amazing display of powerful vocal driven music in the form of the '2 Million & Rising LP' coming this summer. That about evens the balance between the D&B genres within Formation only leaving the infamous Twisted Individual who has been upgrading his studio combining his virtual instruments with some expensive outboard equipment, so expect something different from the Twisted One. All this without even mentioning the humungous World of Drum & Bass worldwide tour. For more check formationrecords.co.uk

TWISTED INDIVIDUAL'S POO TASH

Last year Formation was on top form with hundreds of releases from SS's camp, helped out, no less from the bass master Twisted Individual. Not only does he have a far from empty Djing schedule but he is working his magic on the production and label management side as well. Coming up on the label expect 'Bus' It Tonight' ft MC Biggie, Generation Dub's massive "Voodoo Doll' b/w 'Mars Attacks', then a 12" from Nightwalker. All these are appetisers for the main event, an EP of remixes. Ron touches up Total Science's 'Cats Eyes', Baron gets Zen's 'Turnstyle', Surge is at the controls for Twisted's 'Cannibal Lunch' and Bassline & Drumsound do Generation Dub's 'Voodoo Doll'. In the future expect remixes from Friction & Nu Balance, Audio & Mackie plus an EP from Crissy Cris. In other news you can look forward to his forthcoming Formation material in the shape of 'Poo Tash' and 'Pull My Finger. He has also done a remix of B2B's giant 'World of Music'. 2004 is gonna be BIG year, YES, YES!!



Germany's Lifeline crews are also blessed with monthlies from arguably one of the hungriest men in D&B. This summer they will be hosting a weekly at Club Summum in Ibiza along with two very special parties in Kavos, Greece. All this, plus there is the re-launch of their clubwear brand Devo Wear. Phantasy can be reached at easyrecords.net or djphantasy.com - that is of course if he isn't still organising his world takeover!!

BARON

Baron has been tackling remixes of Futurebounds 'Blind Cobblers Thumb', Zens 'Turnstyle' for Grid as well a remix for the mighty Virus to follow up his 'The way it was 12'. March will see the second release on 'Baron Inc' in the shape of 'Squelch' and 'Dead List Five', two tracks which you will have heard getting a battering by all the big dogs.

BASSBIN

Ireland's Bassbin crew have a few treats in store. Out now there's Breakage, Beta 2 and Equinox. Forthcoming, expect tracks inc Digital's 'Get Away', Breakage 'Stoneheart', Breakage 'Disco 45 rmx'. Keep 'em peeled for an album later in the year.

CARTEL

Ju Ju and Craze's Cartel imprint have their 'Hustling EP' due in April. Featuring 'Machines', 'Montana's War', 'Watched', and 'Too Far'.

ARCHITECTURE

Ink's Fifth Element outfit are causing a stir at the moment, due partly to their 'Stone Cold' single which has recieved remix treatment from the likes of Keaton, Bad Company and Crystl. Keep 'em peeled for Ink & J Dub's 'The One' b/w 'Return of the King', plus DJ Ink's Street Tape Edition: Future Shot Vol 3.

THERMAL

Sifu's Thermal imprint has works due from Angel Zero, Ian Foxfire over the coming weeks, along with a Sifu remix of Polar's '7th Avenue'. Check thermal-recordings.com for more.

BLAME'S 720°

Blames "Outer Zone / Hologram" is out now. This is the first sampler of the tracks to appear on the new CD album: "720 Revolution Part 1 - mixed by Blame". The mixed CD will contain 15 tracks, with some exclusive and unreleased material fused with the best of the 720 releases so far. The CD will be out soon. K.O.T.P's "No Way Out / Look To The Sky" is on promo now. You can also hear Blames new tracks "Sabretooth / Cairo" alongside the entire back catalogue at: 720-degrees.com

4 HERO NEW ALBUM

Since the prolific Mobo award winning, Mercury-nominated "2 Pages" LP and the sublime "Creating Patterns" album, 4 Hero have been relatively quiet for the last 3 years with members Dego and Mark concentrating on Djing around the globe, not to mention Dego's residency at the fantastic broken beats night "Co-op", every second and last Sunday at Plastic People.

They now bring us "The Remix Album", which combines original 4 Hero tracks remixed by some of the most influential producers today such as Masters At Work, Jazzanova and MIST, and their own remixes of tracks by some of the most respected artists such as Goldie, Terry Callier and Nuyorican Soul. With timeless tunes such as "I Am The Black Gold Of The Sun" and "Inner City Life" getting the 4 Hero treatment as well as wicked remixes like MIST's "9 By 9", this will surely be another classic 4 Hero album. With rumoured releases

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the word on the street

CHECKING IN TO HOSPITAL

The mighty Hospital are firing on all cylinders at the moment. Their next compilation 'Weapons of Mass Creation' is set to be one of their biggest yet! Out in April on vinyl and CD (mixed by London Elektricity) featuring tracks from the likes of SKC + Bratwa, Danny Byrd + Adrock ft Foxy, Syncopix, Laroque, John B, Nu Logic, SKC + Safier, London Elektricity, CLS + Wax, Logistics, Cyantific, Konsta, and JFB. In other news London Elektrcity's live show continues. They have just returned from dates in Australia and are gearing up for the release of their live DVD 'Live Gravy' due in May. In the meantime you can check the limited 10" release of the live versions of 'Rewind' and 'Do You Believe', or you can catch London Elektricity live with Ty and High Contrast at the London Forum on 17th April. Talking of the welsh wonder, High Contrast is putting the finishing touches to his new album 'High Society'. Not much info at the present time, but I can tell you the project will hold on board 'Twilights Last Gleaming', 'Made It Last Night', 'Racing Green', and 'Tutti Fruiti' to name but a few. In other news, Cyantific have 'Little Green Men' due (on green vinyl) while Nu:Tone's 'Breathless' should be in stores now.

London's Hospitality night has been the talk of the town for some time now, not content with this, they have set up 2 new residencies, one in Cardiff and the other in Nottingham. All this and I havent even mentioned their great 'Hospital Mix 3' CD that's out now!! Phew.

DEFUNKED

Getting set for the release of their third album 'Soulful Behaviour 2' which certainly looks set to be another stonker from one of the leading lights in soulful beats. On board you can expect music from the likes of Carlito, Fellowship, D.Kay & Epsilon, Calibre, Commix, Kaleb, Laroque, The Insiders, and more. This will be seeing the light on double vinyl or CD mixed by ATM's own DJ Frenzic. Currently circulating is Carlito's 'Forward Motion' b/w 'You're Special'.

BACK 2 BASICS

Back 2 Basics are certainly one of those labels that have been responsible for some mighty mighty tunes over the years. Classics like "It's The Way", "World Of Music", "Back 2 Life", and "Dead Dred" to name but a few have all cemented the Back 2 Basics name in the history books. It's been six years since B2B last released an album so JB and Spice are sure to not disappoint with their forthcoming project 'Razin Hell'. To start things off Spice's XXX 'Porn rmx' is being released in March as a 2 part sampler to the album, other tracks on the sampler are 'Can u Feel It', 'No Sleep', and the in-demand re issued 'Porn' original. The double CD will drop in May, with all the tracks mixed and un mixed, vinyl formats of the album will drop as a double vinyl set, 1 in May and the next to follow in June.

BREAKBEAT KAOS

Adam F and Fresh's Breakbeat Kaos collabo has been causing a stir of late. With Pendulum's debut for the label 'Another Planet' looking to be one of the biggest tunes this year. The 4th release is the long anticipated 'Submarines' b/w a Pendulum remix, plus some slightly off key mixes from Sénor John B. Keep 'em peeled for some more material from Pendulum plus the 'Junglesound' compilation LP ft work from Adam F, Fresh, Pendulum, Future Prophecies, Distorted Minds and more! DogsonAcid.com, the biggest dance music forum in the world, owned by the mighty Grooverider, Adam F and Fresh, launches DogsOnAcid Records on April 26th. Releases will be sold exclusively through the DogsOnAcid shop. The first release is Fresh's unique "Floodlight", with the heavy "Tomb Raider" on the flip.

3D MODE

Out in March will be the first release of 2004 from 3dmode; the remixes of "Supercharged" and "Heavy Monsta Sound" from Hazard, Devize and Three A. Other releases that we can expect to see in 2004 are from MC Biggie vs. 3 and D with "Way Down Deep". Also making sounds from the 3D headquarters will be Karen G, CruMemba and Morgan.

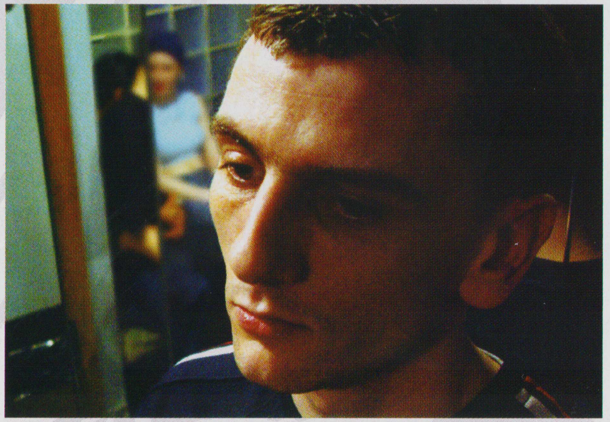
Elsewhere, 3D return on Urban Takeover with a tasty 12" release from Devize, Three A and Karen G. The tracks entitled "Athletix" and "Roast Beef Reheated" are due to be released in the spring. "Day One" and Jam Jar Re-opened" are to be released on "12 on CIA/Advanced from Three A, Devize and Karen G once again. That's not all. With the first 3D album project due for release at the end of 2004, things are looking pretty tidy for the 3D camp. Last but not least, check out the next release on Hazard's label "Radius" featuring a remix of Hazard's "Overload" from Devize and Three A.

NU BALANCE LIVE ON AIR

Long time soldier Nu Balance aka DJ Skinny has joined forces with another Brighton regular; Quantum for Brighton's only drum & bass radio show - Drum and Bass Knights. This show is to be aired every Friday on Juice 107.2FM from 11pm - 1am and archived on the net (totallyradio.com). In the first month you can expect live mixes and interviews with the likes of Friction, C4C and Pendulum, and many more over the coming months.

EZ ROLLERS

The mighty EZ Rollers have done a track with Distorted Minds to be released on D-Style Records. Their own Intercom imprint is to launch a new series of 12's this year called "New Skool Blazers" featuring new artists including Drum and Bass Arena remix competition winners Body and Soul, from Austria, alongside artists from Belgium, USA and



coming out on Reinforced, their groundbreaking label, which has been relatively quiet of late, expect big things from 4 Hero this year. The album is out now.

SINUOUS

The Sinuous crew has a plethora of singles ready to go. The next release will be 'Weed' from Raiden & Ras with Skynet's 'Orient rmx' on the flip, following this will be Raiden's 'Carpetbombin' / 'Flat 32'. Following these we will see a debut 12" from new signing's Propaganda with 'Gunrunner' and 'Life Like'.

You can now check mp3's from back catalogue to dubs online at www.sinuous-records.com, there's also artist info and news on Sinuous events including U.S. and European tours coming soon.

TRIBE

Leeds based record shop Tribe, has just expanded to 3 floors covering all aspects of dance music with DnB specialist Steppa now working in the basement after leaving Play Music. Tribe records can be found at 7 Call Lane, Leeds, LS1 7DH. Tel. 0113 243 3414

PYROMANIAC

Last month Pyrotechnicradio.com and Pyromaniacs was 4 years old and to celebrate, the Sunday sessions returned to Herbal for a night of birthday vibes. Continuing in true style Pyromaniacs will be causing havoc on Easter Sunday (April 11th) at Club M20 in Ashford and then watch out for the huge Weekender in Great Yarmouth on May 21st-23rd.

SOLID VINYL

Solid Vinyl contuinue their MC driven quest with their next batch of releases. First up there's 'Weedah Gunjah' ft MC 5ive O, then comes 'Jerlipy Lip' ft The Ragga Twins, followed by 'One Time' ft TC Iz, MC Det & Skibadee, and finally 'Shut em Down' ft The Ragga Twins, Ed Solo, TC Iz, and Mr Quest. For more info check nu-urbanmusic.co.uk or solidvinyl.co.uk

LOWDOWN

Lowdown is a new Press and promotion company dealing with getting products to the magazine, radio and dj's that matter. For more info hit up Lowdownmanagement@hotmail.com

CRITICAL

Out in April is the 11th release from Critical: Chris Su's 'Satisfy'/'Try Again', following on from this is the Critical debut from Breakage and Alias, a split 12" with 'Plum Fairy'/'Admit To Love'. Look out for the Silent Witness and Break track 'Dialling Out' coming soon with a Calibre remix.

KLUTE ON BBS

Cementing the Breakbeat Science / Commercial Suicide alliance that began with the US release of "Lie, Cheat and Steal", BBS unleashes Hive & Echo's remix of Klute's massive "Gluesniffer" coupled with the previously unavailable "Oshima" on the flip. Watch out for "Klute Presents Breakbeat Science Exercise 003" in North America and "Klute Presents: What Price Will You Pay?" worldwide: the upcoming mixed CDs of Commercial Suicide future classics, out Spring 2004.

HEAVY ROTATION

Friction & Nu Balance's Heavy Rotation imprint have some goodies lined up. March see's Rascal & Klone's 'Hoodwink' / 'Hubba Bubba' whilst April see's Muffler's

the word on the street

the UK. There are already 5 12's ready to go. The series will also feature a budget mix CD showcasing all the tracks. To get your demo considered send it to Intercom, PO Box 32, Beccles, NR34 9XJ. EZ Rollers have just moved into their new 1100 sq foot studio - equipped with 48 ch ProTools and Mackie 24+24 8. Must be seen!

RAM RECORDS

After the success of Moving Fusion's remix EP, RAM gather speed and get ready for the release of the next 3 volumes of the RAM Raiders series. April 12th see's Vol 4 with Origin Unknown's 'Grudge Match', Ed Rush & Optical's remix of RAM Trilogy's 'Beastman', Moving Fusion's 'Think Crazy' and Shimon & Sparfunk's 'Bass Fanatic'. Vol's 5 & 6 will be out on May 10th and June 6th respectivly and will feature the likes of 'Mysterons' by Shimon & Moving Fusion, 'Soak It Up' by Ant Miles ft Sare X, 'Now's The Time' by Moving Fusion & Fierce, 'Cold Killa' by Shimon & Sparfunk, 'Strobe' by Sub Focus, and the massive 'Pack Of Wolves' by Night Breed'. Vol 6 will be released alongside 'Ram Raiders The Mix', mixed and presented this time by Shimon. The Ram Web site and online store are being redesigned and will be relaunched in April with a new limited edition T-Shirt range exclusively for the Ram Store. Frequency has a host of new releases signed for the near future to include Sub Focus with 'Acid Test', Magistrate & Nicol with 'Face Lift', Kryptic Minds & Leon Switch with 'No Escape' and label boss Red One's 'Pump Up The Volume'. The next RAM event will be at the End on May 7th.

BINGO BEATS

Zinc's Bingo project is truly about to smack the scene up. Firstly there's the release's of Zinc & Friction's 'Bingo Sessions Vol 1' mix CD, which is quite simply slammin'. Then the 12"s start coming, Zinc's 'Steppin Stones' / 'South Pacific' followed by Zinc & Slarta Jon's 'Flim' which comes with vocal and dub mixes plus Calibre's take on the same. In the pipeline you can catch releases from D Kay and Raw Q, plus a Shimon remix and plenty more from the man Zinc including the Eksman collabo 'Drive By Car'.

AIRSIDE TEE-SHIRT CLUB 2004

Like a bit of a gamble, but only when the odds are highly favourable? Looking for an unusual gift to tell someone how great they are over and over again? Then look no further than the Airside T-shirt Club. Here 's how it works: Airside commissions four favourite visual artists to design a t-shirt. People subscribe to the Club and receive the four fabulous t-shirts over the course of the summer, one per month.

This year's hugely talented design gods are: Eh? (www.ehquestionmark.com; DM and Jemini, Lex Records) - if you haven 't seen Eh's gorgeous sleeve designs for Lex, check them out and salivate. Next up, borrowed from the Lemon Jelly recording studio where they are putting together their third album, is the lovely and t-shirt gifted Fred Deakin (Airside, Impotent Fury, Lemon Jelly, Chevron). Round that off with Laurent Fétis (www.laurentfetis.com; Beck, Mellow) and Kozyndan (www.kozyndan.com; Giant Robot magazine, War Of The Monsters), and you have four mighty fine designers on your plate.

Examples of the designers' past work is shown here (and on their websites). But remember, the t-shirts are specially commissioned for T-shirt Club so the actual designs will remain a mystery until Mr Postman delivers them. Membership costs £90 for all four shirts (plus P&P - check www.airsideshop.com for details). Subscriptions are accepted until the closing date of 30 April 2004. Members will receive a certificate and badges all bundled up in a lovely screenprinted box. Then when summer arrives, the lovingly crafted t-shirts will arrive each month during June, July, August and September (one designer per month).

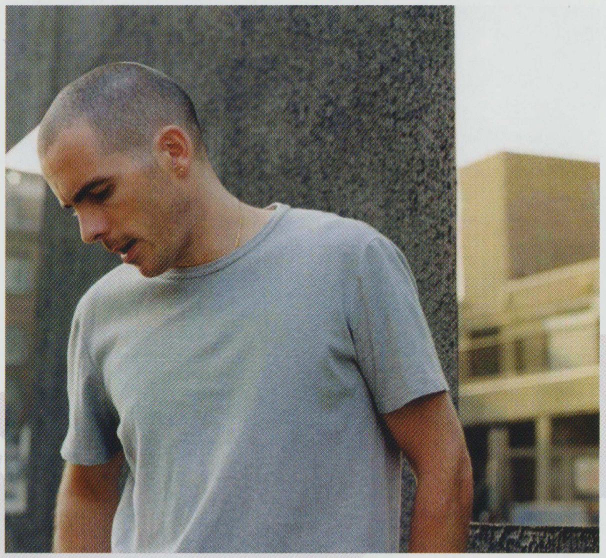
Only Club members can receive these t-shirts. They are never, ever reprinted. Nor sold individually or to non-Club folks. Airside Shop evolved out of the t-shirt design work that London based design company Airside (www.airside.co.uk) has been doing since its early days. As well as selling t-shirts the Shop now sells many other items including one-offs and limited editions, e.g. knitted fun with the Stitches, Dot Com Refugees, screenprints, and postcards - check the site for the full range.

CLOSURE OF THE SANCTUARY

Wednesday 26th November 2003, a dark date to go down in history for all ravers. For on this day, Milton Keynes Council granted planning permission for the Wimbledon Football Club Stadium Development on Denbigh North, the present site of The Sanctuary Music Arena. Since 1992, over three quarters of a million clubbers have visited The Sanctuary to party the night away at Britain's most famous first ever legally licensed rave venue. In the past this venue has played host to Dreamscape, World Dance, One Nation, Pure X, Hysteria, Vibealite, Kinetic, Die Hard, Hardcore Heaven, Helter Skelter, Cream, Garage Nation, Sidewinder, Jungle Fever, Desire, Innovation & Formation, Slammin' Vinyl and many more – it will be sadly missed. But don't get the razor blades out yet! There is light at the end of this long dark tunnel, On Saturday 29th the May Bank Holiday, The Sanctuary will see the last ever Accelerated Culture, the metamorphosis of the most famous of all 90's rave's, Helter-Skelter, and then some, on Saturday 10th July, 12 years after their first party, Slammin Vinyl will hold the last ever event at The Sanctuary, which promises to be "the loudest and longest send off in the history of British Youth Culture".

So after struggling to be kept open in those early years, fighting off objections from the police and even the government, I'm sure you will agree that The Sanctuary deserves a toast…

We at ATM will certainly miss this venue, not the hot dogs or the rides so much but definitely the venue. This is another nail in the coffin for large scale legal parties. Respect! RIP The Sanctuary, 1992 to 2004.



'Roll With U' / 'Fire'. On the associated Transparent check for Raiden's 'Bulldoze VIP' and Reality's 'Step 1', then in April Rascal & Klone drop 'Witchcraft' and a Stakka remix of 'Wildcard'.

CYBIN / LOCKDOWN

Since setting up their own Lockdown recordings imprint Cybin seem to be on a roll. In April you can expect their 5th release 'Dogbite' / 'Dropzone'. In June there's 'Stealth Dread' / 'Docking Bay', and July see's 'Code Red' / 'Begee'.

EMCEE RECORDINGS

Keeping somewhat of a low profile over the last few months, the Emcee camp are set to return with a bang. Fresh's remix of 'Cuban Linx' backed with Cybin's 'Tripods' should be in your shops real soon. This is to be followed by Cybin's 'Tripods rmx' and 'Contact'.

MC TALI GOES LIVE

After recieving video airplay on MTV and The Box for her last single 'Blazin', the follow-up 'Airport Lounge', lifted from her sublime debut album 'Lyric on my Lip' is on the streets now. She has recently completed many live dates along with band members Si John, Yuval, Holly Grant, Zania, D Product aswell as the mighty Roni size.

TECHNIQUE / W.A.R.

2003 was a great year for both Bassline & Drumsound, not only for their Technique and Worldwide Audio imprints but also further afield on V Recordings, Good Looking, and Renegade Hardware amongst others. Following their 'Tinman' release will be debuts from Australian new bloods Skyver & Djon along with Probe. On Worldwide Audio check 'Musical' b/w 'Punchdrunk'. And then comes the pain, their giant 'Odyssey' track gets an airing on Grooverider's Prototype label. This label looks set for more big things in the '04.

VIPER RECORDINGS

April sees the arrival of the second release from Viper in the form of Infrared labelmates J Majik and Wickerman's "Fleshwound". On the flipside the mysterious Cookie Monsters deliver "Roadrunner". In addition to this, look out for a remix of "Blind Cobblers Thumb" by man of the moment Baron which should appear around May, alongside fresh cuts from Futurebound, Codek and Jaquan. Futurebound and Jaquan also have a collaboration forthcoming with dancehall legend Capleton, "We See A Who" will be coming out on Swan-E's Maximum Boost imprint. Futurebound will also be teaming up with J Majik and Wickerman for a new Infrared 12", which should appear in June 2004.

T.H.T.C

The hemp heroes THTC have just added hats and visors to the organic hemp clothing range and have just updated their website at www.thtc.co.uk.

UN-HABITAT

Un-Habitat in conjunction with Ecko Unlimited are planning two events for the early summer. Artists from the urban music field will be aiming to promote a positive message to the youth of today. 30th April sees the first date at London's Shepherds Bush Empire with Dead Prez, GZA, Jazzy Jeff, Lisa Maffia, Semtex, Skitz, Rodney P, Dynamite MC, Killa Kela, and more. On the 2nd May Bristol Academy plays host to Dead Prez, GZA, Jazzy Jeff, Roni Size, Tali, Krust, Die, Clipz, DJ Diggz and more.

WORKIN CLASS HEROES

Our aim here at **ATM** is to illustrate the range and quality of artists coming through in the UK, so this month in **WORKIN CLASS HEROES** we focus on **THEY MADE ME DO IT**'s **SPLAT GALLERY SHOW**. **THEY MADE ME DO IT** is a collective of some of the most talented artists emerging from the UK Graffiti scene at the moment and was created as a platform to showcase these artists and their work to a global audience. The **SPLAT GALLERY SHOW** run from December the 6 - 30th in a disused unit on Kingsland Road Shoreditch. So make sure you check the pictures here to see what the show included also peep the web **THEY MADE ME DO IT.COM**

Make sure you check back next month for a special writer profile on my man **ASTEK** (I promise you it's Hot). Anyone who wants to contribute to **WORKIN CLASS HEROES**, send your photo's to **LEE FRAMER**, Po Box 5307, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS1 1TW or mail me at **leeframer@hotmail.com**

BUSK IN ACTION

SOLO ONE IN ACTION

WISH 1 IN ACTION

SNUG IN ACTION

BUSK/SNUG/BLEACH FINISHED MURAL

INSA · MURAL INSIDE GALLERY

SNUG MURAL

INSA GRAFFITI MODELS

BUSK INSTALLATION

ASTEK · DONT BELIEVE THE HYPE SHOW · OCT 2003

ASTEK · MURAL INSIDE GALLERY

INSA INSTALLATION

SNUG · DONT BELIEVE THE HYPE SHOW

ASTEK · CANVAS

There's a storm blowing in the North West! Manchester & Liverpoo, separated by the M62 motorway and a Manc / Scouse rivalry that goes back generations - are now united in their belief that their region's time has come. Brendan Collins aka Futurebound is Liverpool's number one producer / DJ, he's been pushing drum and bass in the tracksuit Mecca since day one. "Its great," he says in his native lilt. "I've been in the scene since day one and I've been reading ATM from the first issue. Its great to see the way the magazine's progressed and for me to do the cover CD."

Futurebound's cover CD represents a primetime, peak-of-the-night selection. "The mix is a collection of tracks I've been playing out from the last 6-12 months," he explains. "There's some tracks from myself - a few exclusives from Viper and Infrared. I could have kept it all brand new but I didn't want to do that." Keeping the lyrics toasty is Sheffield-based MC E-LL. "I play out with him quite regularly, he's a great MC, he knows how to hype a crowd and the most important thing is he knows when to fuckin, shut up!" he jokes.

MC E-LL has been on the circuit for the best part of ten years making his name at in the north at raves and big nights like NY Sushi & Detonate. Along the way he's become a favourite with J Majik and Adam F and his work with the duo has taken him across Europe. "In a club you've got the atmosphere and the punters in front of you so for this studio mix I tried to capture the feeling and energy of a club while letting the music flow." He describes the cover CD as "another stepping stone." He's currently working on his debut EP.

A producer with credits on some of the top drum and bass labels, Futurebound resisted setting up his own label until he was sat on two particular tracks last year. 'Pied Piper' got beasted by many of the leading DJs and when he and the talented Jaquan came up with the brutal 'Blind Cobbler's Thumb', his phone started ringing 24-7. "I'd been planning to do a label for a long time. 'Pied Piper' had been done for a while and everyone wanted it. Then me and Jaquan did 'Blind Cobbler's Thumb' and Andy C and J Majik were starting or finishing off with it in their sets - it was going off!" While Brendan is the face most associate with Viper, he's quick to praise his spars. "Jaquan & Codec are very talented lads; they've had experience working with bands in studios, so it makes sense we do the label together. A lot of people will see Viper as my thing but a lot of credit must go to those two."

The second Viper release sees the Infrared connection being put to good use as J Majik & Wickerman go head to head with Cookie Monsters on the massive 'Fleshwound' b/w 'Roadrunner'. In June the third release will feature Futurebound and Baron's relick of 'Blind Cobbler's Thumb' and the fourth and fifth releases will surface later in the year. The ace in the pack is calling upon the services of his Infrared brethren. "They're my crew," says Brendan. "Jamie's one of my best mates and Wickerman's a great producer."

Futurebound's hectic DJ schedule has taken him across Europe and even to China over the last year. Closer to home he's relaunched the monthly X event at Liverpool's freshest venue, The Academy. It seems the City's finally set to come out of the shadows. "The shit we've been through In Liverpool for years it's just been me putting out on decent labels and now there's a host of new talent coming through. It's harder being a northerner," he continues. "The thing is we've got our own scene, our own producers, it's been a struggle, and we've all lost money - now its payback time."

Bookings: Profile: andy@profileagency.co.uk

ATM ISSUE 59 CD TRACKLISTING

01. Futurebound & Jaquan
Blind Cobblers Thumb - Viper
I've always said the right time to start a label is when you've done a track that everyone wants. 'Blind Cobblers Thumb' and 'Pied Piper' were two tracks that I had loads of requests for, so Viper was born. This one was made with the sole intention to rock the floor!

02. Gridlok
Heatwave - Violence
This track is a total steamroller, I play tunes with energy and 'Heatwave' has more than a Lucozade factory, and then some!! Watch Gridlock smash it in 2004.

03. Clipz
Jiggy Man - Full Cycle
It's great to see the tide turning in D&B, and finally the people who've been working hard are getting the recognition they deserve. Clipz is another guy whose been knocking out some bad tunes over the last few years on Emcee Recordings and Full Cycle. There's definitely something in the water in Bristol.

04. SS, Twisted & Skibadee
Deal With The Matter - Formation
If anyone's been an ambassador for this scene, it's SS. It's unbelievable how many artists he's turned into premier league names. The b-line in this track is super sick, love this tune to bits.

05. Keaton & Hive
Bring It On - Violence
If you ain't heard this one yet, then where the fuck have you been for the last 6 months! All over the track baby!

06. Kaos, Karl K and Jae Kennedy
Studio 54 - Human
It's great to see the different crews stateside putting out some real inspiring music. This outfit are definitely one to watch, as is Dieselboy's Human imprint.

07. Baron & Total Science
Monkey See, Monkey Do - Baron Inc
This track always put a smile on everyone's face. A real jumpin' b-line without sounding cheesy, certainly one to help Barons new label carry fourth the good work.

08. J-Majik & Wickaman
Scoobeedoo - Infrared
Another killer from my fellow crew members. This is the ultimate D&B track for me, cinematic strings, ruff beats and a naughty b-line switch. Watch out for the vocal mix on this featuring Kathy Brown.

09. Concept 2
Discology - Liftin' Spirits
Love the funk in this track, and whoever's behind this dancefloor murderer definitely left a Ram calling card.

10.Futurbound, Wickerman & J-Majik
Mr Hunger - Infrared
Had loads of fun making this nasty little piece, although you wouldn't think so by listening to it. More stuff from the trio coming real soon.

11.The Cookie Monsters
Roadrunner - Viper
Forthcoming on Viper 002, The Cookie Monsters who's true identity must remain strictly classified, have given me a dangerous little roller. This ones a wicked DJ tool that always sits nice in the mix. Watch out for J-Majik and Wickerman's 'Fleshwound' on the flip.

12. Dillinja
Timeout - Valve
Taken from the mighty Killahertz album, Dillinja shows us again why he's king of the dancefloor. Heavy, Heavy, Heavy!

13. Concord Dawn
Tonite (Pendulum rmx) - Timeless
Timeless is one of the first labels I done stuff for back in the mid nineties, so it's great to see Brillo and the crew still coming with the killer cuts like this. This is just an example of why Pendulum are regarded as one of the top outfits in D&B right now. BAAAD!

14. Futurebound & Codek
Pied Piper - Viper
Orchestrated this one with Codek about a year ago and managed to get some different flavas going on. Watch pout for 'Fiddlers Elbow' by me and Codek coming soon.

competitions

The address to respond to all competitions is:
ATM Comps, Po Box 5307, Southend, Essex, SS1 1TW. or email: comps@atm-mag.com

ATM ISSUE 59. MEGA-COMPETITION!

This issue, ATM is offering one lucky reader the opportunity of a lifetime, with one of our biggest competitions to date, where the prize is SO big it comes in 4 parts!

Part 1: Studio / On the road with Friction

For the first part of this immense comp, you could find yourself at the peril of the Bogeyman! Yep, you guessed it, a day in the studio and a night on the road with the one & only award winning DJ Friction.

With numerous killer tracks such as 'Robocop' and 'Aurora' already under his belt, and the brand new 'R-Type remix' with ATM's own Mr Frenzic causing a stir as we speak, Friction is ready to open the studio doors to this issue's blessed winner.

Whilst at Friction's Brighton based 'Torture Chamber', you can witness a tune being built from scratch and pick up some production tips from the man himself, after that you get to spend the night on the road with Friction for an evening of serious turntable-tastic entertainment.

Part 2: A year on the Ram mailing list

For part 2 of the prize, you will win a year's subscription to the one and only Hornchurch Hardcore, Ram Records mailing list! Which will include full releases from sister labels Liftin' Spirit and Frequency Records too. This is a moment of glory for the lucky winner, as your new Record Pak gets filled in advance with full promo copies of all releases from all 3 of these wicked labels for the next year! With a decade of absolute classics such as '31 Seconds', 'Titan', 'Bodyrock', and 'Screamer' already causing problems for the pressing houses, who could ask for a more substantial vinyl diet?

Part 3: Addict Record Pak

Which leads me nicely to part 3 of the prize, those nice people at Addict have given us one of their new Record Pak bags to bless the lucky winner with. The item in question holds 70 12" records, has a headphone protection compartment, re-inforced sides and base, removeable side supports, backpak straps, a water bottle, and a mobile phone pocket.

This is the choice bag of such luminaries as DJ Cash Money, London Elektricity, DJ Skitz, Adam F, Grooverider, First Rate, Mr Thing, DJ Yoda, DJ Die, Simon Bassline Smith, The Pickpockets, The Mixologists, DJ Bizness, Bryan Gee, and many more, a classy accessory for any DJ I'm sure you'll agree?

Part 4: Hospital goodie pack

The last part of our quadruple quiz prize, comes from the beat surgeons at Hospital Records. After numerous liquid dancefloor killers finding their way into the box of most DJ's over the last few years, and the success of the London Elektricity posse orchestrating many live performances with aplomb, the lads are so chuffed that they are gracing the winner with a pair of cris' Hospital slipmats, and a signed copy of the their latest DVD, which happens to be none other than a live performance of the LE posse recorded on their recent tour. The London Elektricity DVD "LIVE GRAVY" will be out in May, and features the bands full live set from the Jazz Cafe, plus on-the-road disasters, mascot abuse, animated videos and all manner of good gravy, well worth a viewing!

RAM RECORDS

FREQUENCY

HOW TO ENTER

All you have to do to be in the running for this awesome comp, is answer this easy question:

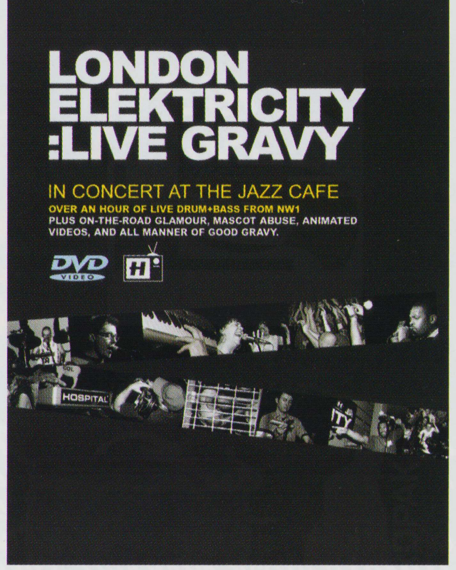
Name Frictions new label, which he is launching with the release of the classic 'R-Type' plus the 2004 Remix.

This issue the competition is text only, so follow these guidelines to enter...

Simply text WINATM followed by YOUR ANSWER to 60999.

All entries are priced at 50p per entry, plus standard text rate (UK residents only) All handsets are compatable.

Competitions/Voting terms:
Terms and Conditions: No refunds can be given. You must be over 16 years of age to enter and have permission from the bill payer (Orange, Vodafone, O2 or T-Mobile). You may be contacted with offers or information, please contact customer care to opt-out; help@txtnation.com or txtNation, P.O. Box 183, Plymouth. Full Terms and Conditions available at http://mpush.msolutions.cc/terms.php



words: Laurent Fintoni
photo: Ella Cooper

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Artificial Intelligence have been making waves on the dnb scene for a little over a year now, and unlike many people's assumption are not just newcomers to the scene, but two hardworking individuals who have spent a long time paying their dues to get where they are today. It took them nearly 10 years to get there, building strong links and connections with established players such as Marcus Intalex, Bryan Gee and Marky, who all helped break their early tunes and give them a firm stronghold on the scene. Originally from and based in North London, Glenn and Gambit have now established themselves on the scene has purveyors of quality dancefloor funk, ranging from the darker tones and moods of their Commercial Suicide and 31 Records releases to the more uplifting tinged rhythms of their V and Soul:r releases. I recently caught up with them in Camden to find out how prolific 2003 had been for them and how things were shaping up for the new year.

How was 2003 for you guys, a good year all round?
AI: Yeah man definitely a good year, eventful and some good surprises all round. We put out a lot of good music and we are happy with the way things are going.

Which label have you enjoyed working for the most?
AI: None of them! (laughing) No seriously though, I think V was the label we've had the closest relationship with and put out the most on, as well as Soul:r, because we've known Marcus for a long time. And also we went on part of their 'Soulution' European tour with them, which was really good. The parties we did with them in Holland, with Major League, and the ones in Switzerland were some of the best we have done.

So what's in store for you guys in 2004?
Glenn: well first up we have a 12" release for 31 records to follow the King of the Rollers 5 EP, 'Silicone Valley' back with 'Inside', which should be out around April. Also look out for a follow up 12 on V Recordings as well as Hospital and some work in progress for Soul:r. We also have the remix of 'Slammin' on EMI, which is a track by Eric Pridz, and is quite a big tune already. It's being rinsed out by everyone in the scene from Andy C and Zinc to Groove and even Pete Tong who played it on his radio show! So we are really happy with that, and it has also lead us to being offered more remix work from EMI, like the opportunity to do an official mix for the next Kelis Single, so watch this space.

Do you still get offered loads of remix work?
AI: Yeah man all the time! The thing is that the EMI work has led us to links with loads of big House names. And so we always make sure that if we take on a remix it's something that has elements we know we could use in our remix, we ain't just going to take anything on for the sake of it. Like our remix of 'Angels Fell' coming out soon on GLR, is another good example of how we approach remixes. That one is going to be on the sampler 12" for the remix compilation coming out. They felt ours was strong enough to be on the sampler and that is something we are really proud of and it shows another side of our work.

Any new gigs for you guys, new residencies?
AI: Well yeah a few actually, we have a new residency at Traffic, and Swerve which starts in March (fingers crossed), they are gonna take us in the roster of artists and work it from there. We also have another one in Leeds and Deeper Thinking, which is in Cambridge. So it's all good on the DJing front really, we also have quite a lot of gigs overseas, which is still a majority of our DJ work. Germany has been big for us last year and Holland and Austria too. It's good, we get to see new things and play together.

Do you find that it's different when you play abroad, do you get more time for your sets?
Gambit: Yeah for sure, the thing is when you go abroad they pay more for you to come over and do your thing so we always get more time to play and give people their money's worth! We even played a 4 hour set once, and it was great being able to work the crowd. Thing is in most parts of Europe the crowds are really different, the people who come down you might not think are into dnb at all but then once they get into it they are a really good crowd. It's a different experience and well worth it.

You have made a name for yourselves with a string of more soulful, disco influenced tracks, but I know you are keen not to be thought of as having just one style.
AI: Each time we do something we try and take our influences and put them in the track. We have made different types of track not just the one type, but it's true that the ones that have been welcomed the best have been the more soulful ones. Thing is, if we have tracks that are being played by everyone from Andy C to Bukem then surely that means we can't be bracketed. We have space to do what we want and we are going to continue to do that. We definitely want to change some things and flip some more new styles on people when they expect it the least!

Any collaborations in the pipeline?
Gambit: Well we haven't really thought about it, but I'm sure that is something that will happen with time. I mean Marky and XRS are one obvious collaboration that will happen. But the thing is because we already are a duo, most of the time our tracks already are collaborations. But there are other people like Ill Logic and Raf who we are close to and also TC1 and Stress Level, which I'm sure we will work with at some point.

How do you find working together in the studio? What's the chemistry like?
AI: Yeah man it's all good. We work really well together, we both bring different things to the mix, and we share all the duties and responsibilities, we aren't the type of duo where one person is more dominant at one thing then the other. We go back and forth and feed off each other, and so far it's proved to be a successful formula!

What about the whole CD/dubplate argument, what's your take on that? I know you guys aren't really into holding your tunes too long and would rather have them released soon after they start being played out.
Gambit: Well you know, there are a lot of different opinions on the subject but as far as I am concerned, I play more CDs now then plates. Everything is getting digitized and I don't see the point of trying to fight it so hard, instead we should take it and let it grow. One thing: it's more convenient, most dubs are still bad quality and wear out quickly, if I press a tune and its not good enough then I have to pay another £60 for a new plate, and it just doesn't add up, you know? It makes sense on sound quality and money wise too. I don't want to say they are better, but they work better for me. At the end of the day anyone who says otherwise has got loads of money! And also all this talk of downloading and people ripping you off, well I agree but I also think that I want to make a good living out of this, we all have bills to pay and if someone downloads my shit and plays it and spreads my music that way then it's all good. It will come back to you somehow, they might go and buy your records because they heard them before. I think right now, it's like we are back in the 60's with the whole digital thing, and it's like free love and everyone wants to share things with each other and that's why it's a bit unregulated. And then at some point it will change and things will sort themselves out, that's what I think anyway.

Have you got any plans for setting up your own label? I know you said you have had some interest from distribution companies before.
Glenn: When the time is right it's definitely something we will get round to. But for now we concentrate on the music. Gambit: yeah, let other people deal with the admin!

How do you feel about internet boards?
Glenn: I used to check them when we started up, to try and see what people were saying but then I was like "why should I worry?" We don't really bother with them any more. People get paid to talk shit everywhere these days so what's new? Gambit: It's good in the sense that it lets the word out and if people talk about you then there are more chances they'll buy the records. Let's just say I'd worry if we got these type of reactions on the dancefloor!

words: Ahmed Reset
photo: Jamie Symonds

Without question, the one surprise winner from last years Knowledge awards was MC Foxy being awarded the highly coveted accolade of world no 1 drum & bass MC despite very little self promotion or even his own website it all came down to the years of experience and the support of the ravers. With Foxy even admitting that he was 'surprised to be even nominated' himself and was pleased just to get a guest-list to the ceremony "One of the only times when everybody in the scene is together in one place at one time." Though with New Breed on a high and his inimitable MC style moving dancefloors across the country and beyond for the best part of a decade now, it shouldn't be such a shock after all.

After many failed appointments, I finally catch up with MC Foxy in his native South London, from the comfort of a friend's snooker hall/café' in which he confesses to hiding out in most of the time, when not at home or working. Standing about 6'3 and dressed in a bomber jacket, red hoodie and a tracksuit, topped off with his near trademark-pulled down beanie cap, Foxy is clearly very at home in these surroundings and appears to know everybody that enters and leaves the small restaurant during the course of our interview. Despite having one of the most rugged flows on the floor, Foxy as a person comes across as friendly polite and softly spoken, it's only when the mic is passed that the booming baritone and aggressive lyrics are unleashed.

"I think my style is a mix of all the different styles of D&B, I can come in and do a hosting kind of style and then I can switch it up into the fast style chatting, so I'm a versatile MC and with MCs getting so much more respect nowadays people take note so it's good for me and it's good for New Breed."

Like most MCs Foxy still lives and represents for the area he grew up in, starting out living in Croydon before a brief stint in Chatham Kent "Where I was the only Black guy there" Foxy soon found himself once again coming back to South London with the Foxhole finally dugout in the vicinity of Peckham Rye "I'd always be hanging round here anyway so I guess it was just a natural progression for me to finally move up here, I've got a lot of friends in the area so that's what I know" with those friends including Fatman D and the rest of the now notorious New Breed collective their coming together as a force to be reckoned with was always inevitable and since winning the No 1 spot the workload has only gone up.

"Leeds Thursday, Germany Friday – that's after Innovation at Milton Keynes and then Bristol on Saturday..." he pauses to light up "That's like a typical weekend nowadays, I got some more work since winning the award, I'm getting paid to perform over in Miami in a few weeks which I haven't done yet, and some other stuff but truthfully it's always like this... non stop."

From humble beginnings Foxy started out chatting at the Monday club ran at the time by hardcore heroes Ratpack, then networked his way onto Kool FM and began to make a name for himself on the London pirate radio scene before finally breaking through into clubs and the big raves around '95/'96 thanks to some help from Nicky Blackmarket among others. "Yeah my cousin is Rodney P and I spent a lot of time hanging round with them lot growing up. It was a positive influence on me but I didn't realize how much until much later on. We've actually been planning to do some tunes together for a while now it's just a case of him being free at the same time as me, but we should hopefully get something down soon... if I ever do start doing some Hip-Hop stuff it will definitely be with Rodney, Skitz and them boys but right now I'm concentrating on New Breed and my D&B work

New Breed the infamous collaboration between Foxy, Fatman D, Eksman, Shortston and Herbzie have been hurting floors up and down the country for a good while now and are among the main crews in D&B today. "I started New Breed towards the end of the nineties. It was between me Fatman and Riddla we used to be called the three amigos and then it was like, the three amigo's... the new breeds about. Until it became the name of the crew. Fatman knew Eksman better than me and introduced him but no-one ever asked to be in the crew we went out looking for them."

New Breed have been on a high of late with their latest 'Ouch' single doing very well indeed shifting almost 4000 copies with 3500 going in under four days. "We've got another one coming called 'Revolution'... they're just little testers, a lot of the time when we give out tracks the DJs are afraid to play them as they're not sure about vocal tunes but they do well when they come out. We've just got a deal with Nu-Urban and we're putting out a tune called 'War' we've been considering holding it back not knowing if it's a good subject matter to be coming out with at the moment, with regards to violence in the scene and all the rest of it, but personally I think it's a good track so we're probably going to start up New Breed recordings again..."

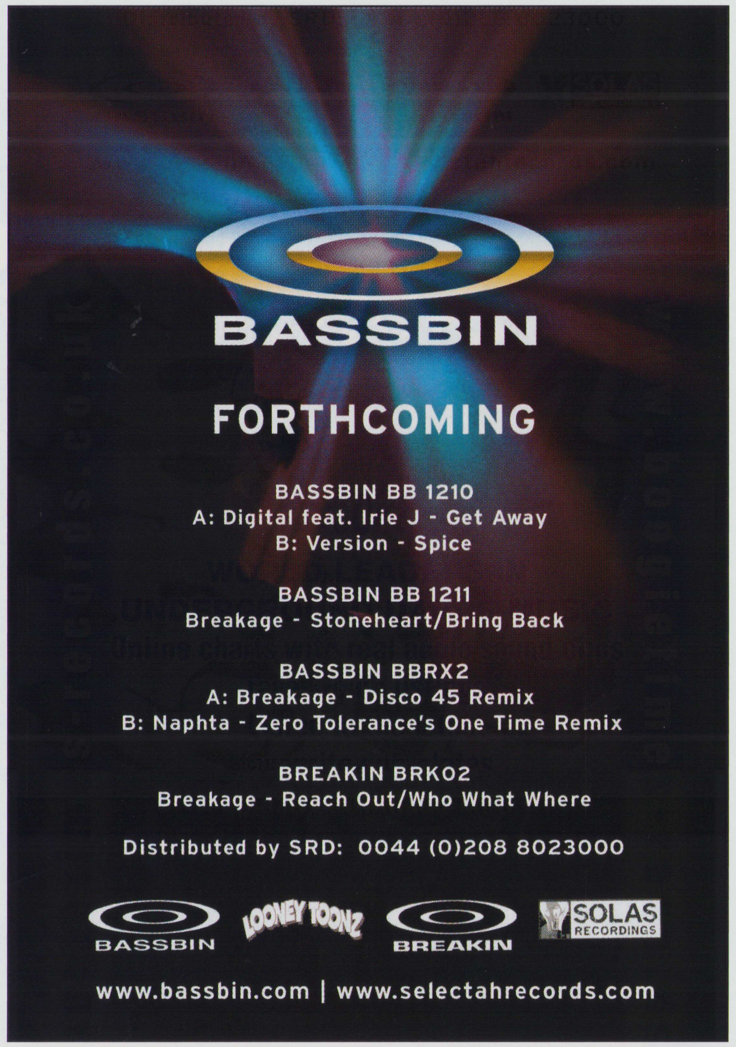
Again? "Yeah me and AV did some stuff before. We just pressed up about a thousand copies ourselves and then drove round distributing it ourselves and just got rid of em' however we could' basically the old fashioned way, but nowadays we need a dedicated record company for that sort of thing. So that's why we've hooked up with Nu Urban. We've even got a DVD coming featuring ourselves and our music, some rave footage and stuff."

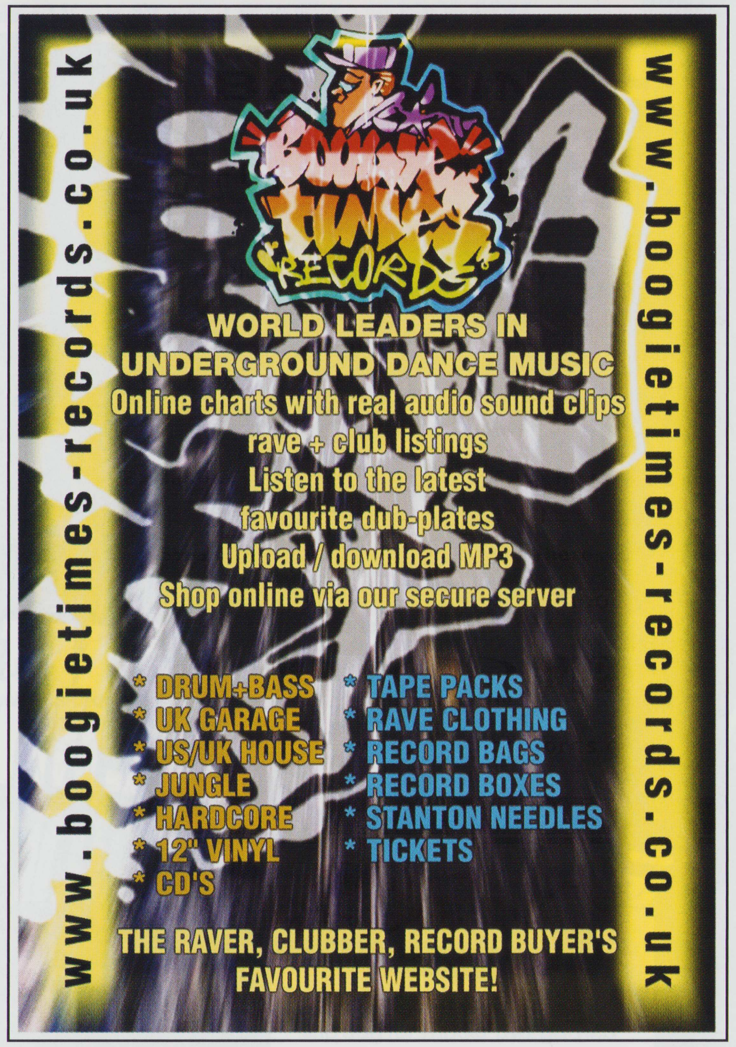
With a lot of attention and fingers being pointed with regards to violence and crews in the underground scene, nowadays do New Breed take any precautions to avoid any career damaging 'beef's'. "There's nobody in New Breed who wants to cause trouble or be rude or aloof to the ravers, and everyone knows that it's really down to certain people's attitudes and security to make sure people don't get into venue's with weapons and such like with other forms of music. But we don't buy into the 'Bad Boy' thing as it's not good for the scene"

Internationally Foxy is about to set off on a tour of America and Canada finishing in New York and then on to the Miami music conference "I've got a big following in Canada and get a lot of respect out there... Toronto. You've got the eternal drum and bass triangle London, Toronto, Mannheim that's the main scene's there. There are a few guys we work with over there, the main guys New Breed support overseas are MC Tragedy and MC Bandit in Canada, there is a very lively scene in Canada. With lot's of good DJs and some talented producers also."

As for this country Foxy has dates all over the map all the time stretching from Edinburgh downwards "The Sanctuary is one of my favorite venues in the UK when it's filled it's really wicked. I recently played at a venue called Bed which was wicked as well. The way it was all set up was really, really clever. Also, the Ultra Festival in Miami they have it every year, the first time I played there it was actually on the beach itself. The way they had it set up the stage was facing out to sea and the crowd would just fill out the beach. I would be up there chatting and looking out to sea across a tropical blue ocean thinking this is a long way from Peckham. There are moments. Like the other day we did an under 18's rave and a group of giggling teenage girls managed to pull down my tracksuit bottoms whilst I was going back to back with Eksman... I felt violated" London needs some new proper venue's set up instead of just old cinema's like most of the places in London. New Breed are looking to start a club night some where around London, not a big thing but just something for the crew to chill out at and try out our new stuff."

MC Foxy is clearly dedicated to the D&B MC lifestyle and is constantly working on one project or another, taking himself and the New Breed to ever new heights. With the aforementioned DVD release, the 'Revolution' and 'War' single's upcoming and of course the return of New Breed recordings the future of the crew looks even better than their already extremely successful past.





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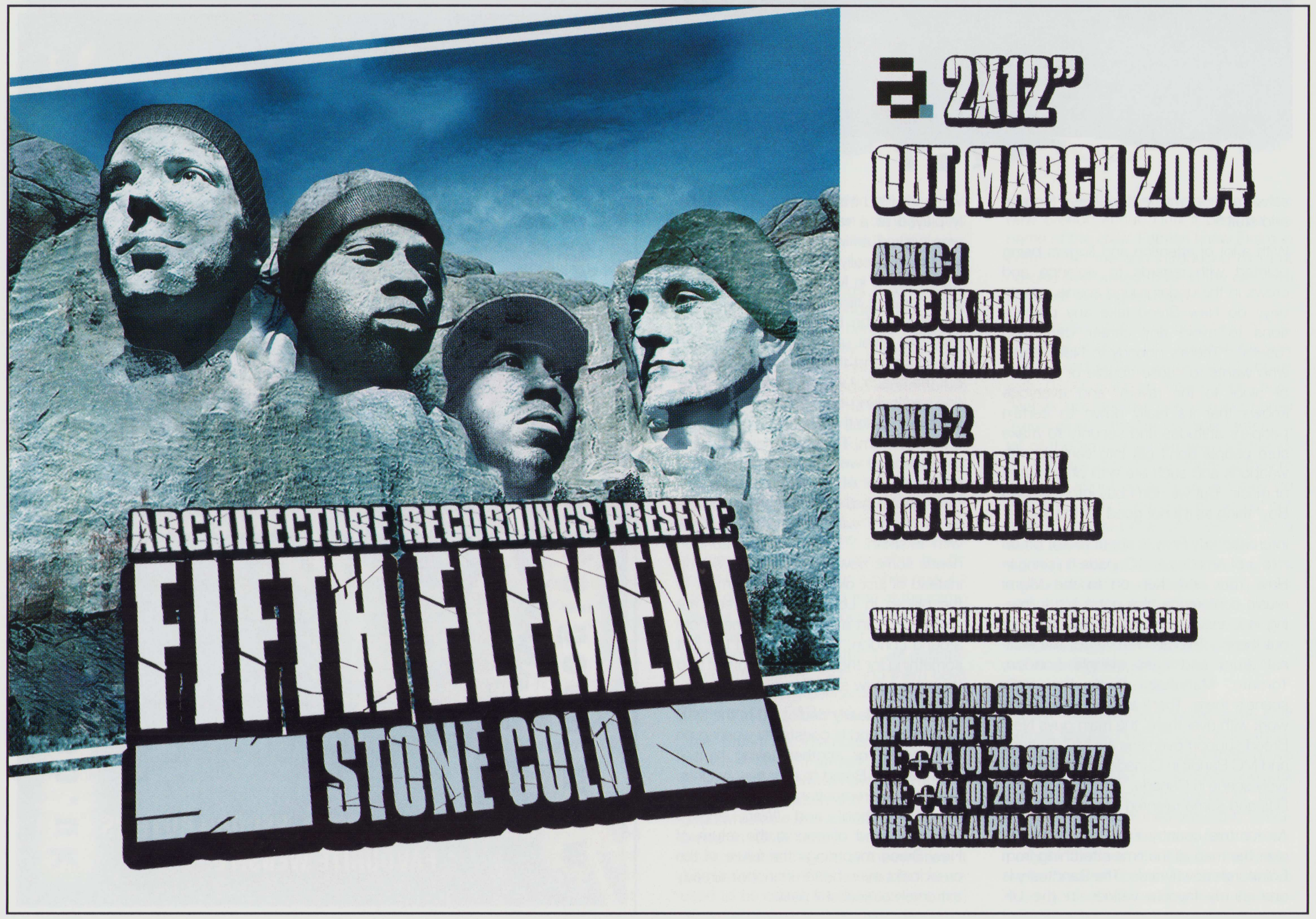

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CYANTIFIC

Names: Jon Stanley & Matt Whitehead

Alias: Cyantific, CydeFX

Age: 22 & 23 respectively.

Based: An Attic, Richmond, Southwest London

Biggest tunes so far: '90°' / 'All Points West' on Hospital from a numbers point of view. I think 'Neon Skyline' was the biggest in terms of reaction, as it was reasonably different to the flavour of the times. We also did a remix of the Nextmen and MC Dynamite's 'High Score' which was really well received by the breaks scene and the alternative DJs on Radio 1.

How long have you been making tunes? About 7 or 8 years now. It's a never ending learning process though. We changed up the way we work in a big way recently – moving from a PC based set up running a load of crap software, to a Mac setup running Logic 6. It felt like we were starting all over again, but we wouldn't change back for all the money in High Contrast's account.

How did u get into music? Always been there.

If you had to choose DJ'ing or Production, which would it be & why? Production, no question. Dj'ing is great fun no doubt, and the buzz is something I'd miss but it can't even begin to compare to the amount of enjoyment you get from production. It's like Dj'ing is the quick hit, but production is the present that just keeps on giving. Or something like that. Besides, Matt doesn't DJ at the moment.

What music inspire or influence you? Everything and anything. Electro, to Techno, to Soundtracks, to House, to Old Skool etc. It's all in there somewhere.

What track would you most like to have written? If we're talking D&B, I think 'Piper' by Jonny L. Generally things that come along and blow your head off and make you say 'what the fuck was that?'. 'Convoy' by Matrix is another example of this. That era seemed to do that often.

Who's your favourite DJ? Flight has always supported us, and plays a similar selection to us. Excellent taste!

What party or event would you most like to play at and why? I'd like to hit the beach parties in Puerto Rico. As far as London goes, Hospitality @ Herbal is consistently wicked. Anywhere the crowd responds to good music is all you can ask.

Favourite studio equipment? Kenwood JK350 Kettle.

What's the best studio advice you've been given? To take breaks when it comes to mixdowns. Also when working on your arrangement to turn the screen off when it comes to listening back to what you've done. Drink a lot of tea, preferably with digestives, chocolate ones… with caramel.

What's next for you? Builiding a scale model of the A-Team van in our tool shed. Also releasing more music with Hospital, starting with 'Quiet Star' on the Weapons of Mass Creation LP. A remix for Skunkrock, one for XRS on Critical, and one for Deep Blue and Omni Trio.

KONTROL

Name: Kontrol

Alias: None, although I might make one up to put out rubbish! Haha. Nah I would never bother. It takes so much effort to make a track. I'd always put my name to it. If it wasn't good enough it just wouldn't come out. Although early in your career you sometimes don't have a choice.

Age: 26

Based: Colliers Wood, London, England

Biggest tunes so far? I'd have to say 'Forcefield' on Renegade Hardware that came out on the Essential Rewinds LP. I actually wrote it with Future Cut and they hated it. They went on tour to the States and it got a great response – so out of courtesy they let me put it out as just DJ Kontrol. I thought that was a cool thing for them to do. 'Erased from Existence' with Calyx on Metalheadz was also a big tune for me. When I first started it seemed that would never be possible. It's very surreal.

How long have you been making tunes? My first track came out on the TOV Mission Control LP with Usual Suspects in 1998. So you could say 6 years although my recent solo excursions have only been running for about 3 years. I realised I couldn't keep just doing collaborations with engineers and Future Cut forever. So I bought a Mac, got Logic and taught myself how to engineer and make tunes solo.

How did u get into music? My mum worked for Ozzy Osbournes record label Jet Records and then in Peter Webbers Recording studio in Putney, so I was always around music from a very young age. Always around live music and musicians – I didn't go to school much so it was kind of part of my whole persona. I remember being onstage at the Reading Festival while Meatloaf was performing live - seeing him getting pelted with bottles thinking I never want to be on stage. One hit him and broke his nose. Funny how things turn out. I got a can of beer thrown at me when I played Konflict's 'Messiah' Dj-ing in Budapest. I don't think they hated it - they just got a bit excited. That was a weird coincidence.

If you had to choose DJ'ing or Production, which would it be & why? I'd have to say production. I mean I started off as a DJ, playing on pirate radio stations like Don FM, Scandal and Flex in 1996 and playing at any club I could get work at. I progressed onto playing at The End and Fabric playing for Renegade Hardware and Prototype. I've also played out a lot in Europe and really enjoy it – theres no feeling like it. I see myself as a DJ primarily. But I feel that anyone can mix and be a DJ these days if you're good or not. These days its all about what tunes you make and have and I feel the only way your going to get access to those tunes is by making tunes yourself. I also feel Production is the only real way you can make a big difference to the music as a whole. By contributing to the genre itself. Otherwise who are you to say anything?

What music inspire or influence you? I'd say everything from Mobb Deep to Metallica to a Vangelis film score. I used to be so closed minded about music all I'd listen to is D&B morning noon and night. Now I've branched out into listening and appreciating literally anything. I think it's the transition of spending more time between Production and Djing that has caused it.

What track would you most like to have written? '31 Seconds' by Origin Unknown. Any tune that has smashed up dancefloors for 11 years and is still going strong is an unmatched achievement in Drum and Bass. I would love to achieve that. Non-Drum and Bass? Probably a classical symphony – I'd love to have the skill to be able to do that.

Who's your favourite DJ and why? I have a lot of respect for a lot of DJ's but my answer is Andy C. Overall he is the most proficient, professional and consistent DJ ive heard over the last ten years. From early days at Telepathy to Ram at the end in 2003. Ive never heard him and felt disappointed.

What party or event would you most like to play at and why? The Rio De Janeiro Carnival in Brazil – I don't think you get a greater feeling as a DJ than that. Ive played at the Notting Hill Carnival and that was amazing but I couldn't imagine that vibe on a bigger scale!

Favourite studio equipment? Dynaudio BM15 studio monitors. They have revolutionised my engineering. They are quality studio monitors that I'd recommend to anyone. My Mackie desk and G4 come in a close second.

What's the best studio advice you've been given? Always use solid samples to start with – without those initial building blocks you might as well forget it. If theres a sample you really want to use that is poor quality I'd say find another sample.

What's next for you? I've got a Tech Itch 12" coming out, a track with Calyx on his Metalheadz EP called 'Dark Night', a tune on the forthcoming Renegade Hardware LP called 'Born In Pain' and a remix of 'Exhaust' forthcoming on Arqer & Realtime's Monkey Business label. I've also done a D&B rework of a Secret Service track for Southside Recordings.

I'm also starting a label with Calyx called Figure of Eight, with the first release being 'Drums Take Control' / 'I Need You'. I'm also continuing my work with my mailout company – Squadron. I'm also in the process of writing an EP for Moving Shadow and a 12" for Ink's Architecture label. The plan is to keep going and try to push forward in 2004.

leaders of the new skool

GRIDLOK

Name: Ryan Powell

Alias: Gridlok / Violence Crew

Age: July 7,1978

Based: San Francisco, CA

Biggest tunes so far? That's really hard to say. It's probably a fair toss up. "Heatwave" on Violence is out and has done well with it making number 2 on Grooverider's 5 mighty rollers as well as being played by just about everyone. But I anticipate my Virus 12" as well as this remix I've done of the classic Ed Rush & Optical tune "Compound" to really raise the scene's awareness.

How long have you been making tunes? I've really been involved in music at some capacity for most of my life. As far as dancefloor drum n' bass I'd have to say something like 98 is when I started.

How did you get into music? My first instrument was a violin when I was 7 years old. It just kept perpetuating itself from there. What got me into drum n' bass though would have to be the Platinum Breaks compilations and the Wormhole LP.

If you had to choose DJ'ing or Production, which would it be & why? That's like asking if you wanna lose your right arm or your left arm! I suppose that my heart lies more in the studio if I HAD to pick, but really I love djing too. Without one, the other looses its excitement.

What music inspire & influence you? Most recently I've been pretty eclectic in my selection of tunes to listen to at home. A lot of jazz or old 70's funk as well as other shit like Radiohead or Primus.

What track would you most like to have written? Um, really don't look at things like that. It seems to me that it would be impossible to put myself in anyone else's shoes like that. I'm better off concentrating on making my own tunes I'd wager!

Who's your favourite DJ & why? That's another really tough one. I've seen many amazing sets in my time. I'd have to give it up for Andy C, Dieselboy, and Mampi Swift for rinsing drum n bass sets, and Craze for unmatched style and skill with his turntablism.

What event would you most like to play at & why? As time moves on I feel more and more inclined to come to London. I've played just about everywhere in the U.S. as well as half a dozen other countries, but I'd like to go where drum n' bass was born.

Favourite studio equipment? These aren't getting any easier!! Favorite piece of studio gear, that doesn't mean most vital right!? Then I'm gonna go with the EMU sampler. I get a lot of unique sounds out of that and it's usually quite a bit of fun in the process.

What's the best studio advice you've been given? I've been given quite a bit throughout the years and I've found myself really looking for it at times. But at the end of the day I can't think of really a single thing I've been taught that I'm using in my tunes right now. The way I work is really a self-developed process. Maybe there are some borrowed techniques buried in there somewhere but they've long since been made my own.

What's next for you? There are a few things on the top of my list for this year. One of them would be my label "Project Fifty-One". The 4th release will probably be hitting about the time of this article and that one has "Shallow" by myself and "Pacemaker" with Silver for the flip. I am really pleased with how these turned out and I hope vinyl buyers will dig it as well! Also there's Josh Wink - Evil Acid (Gridlok Remix) for his new double CD, the remix is coming out with a J Majik remix on Human Recordings and I'm just starting Usual Suspects' 'Doorway' with Echo.

Besides that is "Violence Recordings" which has developed into a serious breakthrough for drum n' bass labels in the United States. I think we've gotten the world's attention finally and I hope to see P51 follow suite. Trust me when I say we have BIG plans for Violence, the best is yet to come.

Virus Recordings is probably the main thing I'm interested in outside of my own affairs. I've always wanted to work with Ed Rush & Optical and I've taken this opportunity very seriously. That 'Compound' Remix I had done I pretty much killed myself on. I had no samples which was a big chore plus that's one of my favorite tunes ever. So I'd have to say Virus has gotten the most sweat out of me and probably will continue to.

COMMIX

Names: Conrad Whittle, George Levings & Guy Brewer.

Alias: Commix.

Age: Guy and George are both 23. Conrad is 21.

Based: Cambridge

Biggest tunes so far? "The reaction we've had from our remix of Die's 'Autumn' has been great so far, we really enjoyed doing that because it's a favorite of ours."

How long have you been making tunes for? Guy:"I've had bits of studio equipment since I was about 17 so I was able 2 mess about with breaks and stuff, but because back in those days equipment was so pricey I could never afford a whole studio. It's only 'cause of the whole software thing that we've been able to achieve what we have." Conrad: "Yeah Me and Guy started messing around with beats and stuff about 6 or 7 years ago. But we only started producing seriously as Commix, with George about 2 years ago." George: "I've been making music for a long time in bands and stuff. Only been making Drum and Bass for the last couple of years."

How did you get into music? Guy: "My older brother used to play me all the old tape-packs and after hearing tracks like Champion Sound and Demons Theme I was hooked. I started buying vinyl soon after and it was around that time that I hooked up with Conrad." Conrad: "I Started listening to my brother mixing Hip-Hop when I was about 10 so I wanted to start Dj'ing then. Guy and me started buying records and brought ourselves a pair of 1210's when we were at school." George: "Playing flute in orchestra's, playing sax in jazz bands and rhythm keys in acid jazz / funk bands."

If you had to choose between Dj'ing or Production, which would it be? Guy: "For me the two go hand in hand so it's hard to make a choice, one of the great things about Dj'ing is it teaches you how to make something work on the floor. That for me is the most important thing and is where a lot of "Soulful" drum and bass fails to cut it in my opinion." Conrad: "It's an impossible question really! But there's nothing like seeing the reaction to one of your tunes on the dance floor for instant gratification." George: "Production... I don't DJ!"

What Music inspire and influence you? "We listen to lots of stuff so I guess it all has an impact somewhere along the line, we tend to go for nice warm, gritty production over the more plastic sounding stuff that seems to be everywhere nowadays."

What track would you most like to have written? Guy: Doc Scott - Unofficial Ghost - Metalheadz. Conrad: Goldie & KRS One - Digital [Boymerang rmx] George: Roy Ayers - Everybody Loves The Sunshine

Who's your favourite DJ and why? Fabio cause he's always pushed the quality music be it soulful, hard or whatever and steered away from playing just for the kids. Marky creates a good vibe too, his sets are always an inspiration.

What event would you most like to play at & why? Guy: "Its got to be Love.E in Sao Paulo cause everyone I've spoken to says it has the most amazing atmosphere you'll find anywhere." Conrad: "We're playing soon at the Return to V album launch with Marky + XRS, Marcus + Calibre, Nu:Tone and A.I in the same room. I'm looking forward to that because these guys are making some of the best music around."

Favourite studio equipment? Our Computers! Software wise it's got to be Reason. Since we got it a while back our hardware just collects dust, a lot of people slag it off for not being as slick as Cubase or Logic but with those programs its easy to get excited about the latest plug-in or whatever and forget to actually make some music.

What's the best studio advice you've been given? Guy: "You can't polish a turd! Forget about compression, fancy EQ and FX, none of these things ever made a shit track sound good. You're better off learning a few programs or bits of kit and sticking with whatever suits your way of working even if that's an Atari S.T. and a s1000 sampler...". Conrad: "Keep it simple stupid". George: "It's not the notes it's the space between them that matters"

What's next for you? Remixes of DJ Suv's 'Suenos Different' and DJ Die's 'Autumn' on V Recordings. We've also done a remix for Good Looking called "Luck of the draw" by some guys from Australia called Vice Versa. Also coming up is a 12" for Creative Source, 'Surround' on Nu:Tone's imprint Brand Nu and 'Hung Up On You' on the new V off-shoot Liquid V. We're working on a 12" for Doc Scott's 31 Records and we've got a track forthcoming on Hospital called 'Roots Train'.

NU BALANCE

Name: Nu Balance.

Alias: DJ Skinny – one quarter of The Militia.

Age: 28

Based: Burgess Hill – just north of Brighton.

Biggest tunes so far? 'Robocop' – True Playaz, 'Electrolux' – Charge.

How long have you been making tunes? 8 – 9 years.

How did u get into music? When I was at about 14 I used to go to hip hop concerts like De La Soul and Public Enemy then in my last year at school a friend took me to a rave. I was really inspired by the music and the DJs, especially Carl Cox and Luke Slater who where kind of the local hero's at the time. Luke Slater had a shop in Brighton where you could buy rave music so soon after visiting it I was buying records regularly and Djing at local parties and clubs. After that I met various people making music the most significant being Stakka and K.T. who sold me my first sampler.

If you had to choose DJ'ing or Production, which would it be & Why? Production because it never gets boring with so many people making so many different styles of music and so many companies designing new machines. But there is a part of me that loves Djing and would prefer to let all the other people make wicked music for me to mix.

What music inspire and influence you? I prefer music with breaks really, but all different kinds of music influences me from hip hop to classical to drum and bass, it's more about the vibe that the track creates or the idea that does it for me.

What track would you most like to have written? 'Apollo' - LTJ BUKEM. Also I wish I had written 'Everything I do' by Bryan Adams, it went to number one for 13 weeks and with that money I could concentrate on drum and bass without worrying about paying the rent.

Who's your favourite DJ & why? Andy C and Friction, tight mixing and energetic selection. Friction just wins it though – because he gives me a lift home.

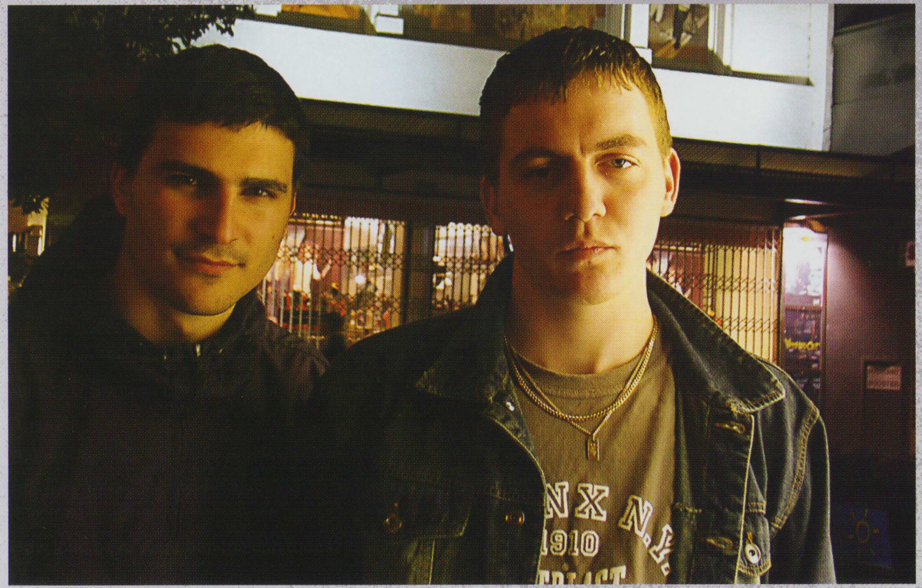
What event would you most like to play at & why? I would like to go back in time and play for A.W.O.L. at The Paradise Club because in my opinion, it was just the best place in the entire history of drum and bass. The sound was really clear, the MCs where minimal, DJs played long sets and everything was so fresh back then. Instead of every tune being pulled back, records where only rewound when they were new.

Favourite studio equipment? It's a valve pre amp, but it's my secret weapon so I can't tell you what its called. Apart from that it would have to be my Emu E4 Platinum or even my spectrum analyser (Beringer Ultracurve), I take it with me when I work in other peoples studios because it helps me get the level of difficult frequencies such as bass just how I want them.

What's the best studio advice you've been given? A guy once said to me "You can't polish a turd". Sounds funny but basically what he meant was that if your sound - a snare for example, has no energy in the first place it doesn't matter how much compression and E.Q. etc you add its always going to be pretty crap. You can't really add energy, the better option would be to spend time looking for a fat sound in the first place, then with compression and EQ you can make it fatter.

What's next for you? Try not to take things too seriously and make music people want to dance to. Also continue getting in the studio a lot and try to push my self as a DJ. Friction and I have forthcoming projects on True Playaz ('Bogey Man') and Valve ('Again+Again'). Also the new Renegade Hardware album (School of Hard Knocks) features 'War Cry' by The Militia.

SKYVER & D-JON



Name: Alvin Sabic & David Joncheff

Alias: None as yet

Age: 21 and 23 respectively.

Based: We are both based in Adelaide, Australia

Biggest tunes so far? That would have to be the 2 on the first release 'Justice' + 'Facedown', we have a lot of big ones in the making tho so hold tight.

How long have you been making tunes for? Skyver: I've been makin tunes for about 5-6 Years. D-Jon: I've been making tunes for about 7 years.

How did You get into music? S: I first got into music through a band at high school and then moved on to listeing/producing hip hop and progeressed to dnb from there. D: I was working in a record store when I was younger and from there decided to get into producing.

If you had to choose DJ'ing or Production, which would it be & why? S: I would have to choose producing. Theres more satisfaction in making your own tunes, hearing them gettting played out, seeing a dancefloor going nuts to a song you've made. D: Producing because you actually own something when you've finished the work.

What Kind of music inspire or influence you? D: Heavy Metal, hip hop. S: I get influences from all types of music. You cant just get all your influences from the type of music you are producing because you'll never think of anything original. I try and get influences from a very broad range of music, movies etc.

What track would you most like to have written? S: Pendulum - Another Planet. It's so musical, different and full of so many ideas. D: Goldie - Mother (VIP)

Who's your favourite DJ & why? S: Fierce. The guy has so much energy. Every party I've seen him play at here the place has just blown up when he steps up. D: Zinc. He's talented as a DJ and producer and they both complement each other.

What event would you most like to play at & why? S: We would love to play the Miami WMC. I've seen a lot of videos of it and would love to be part of it. D: Any party part that's up for phat hard beats.

Favourite studio equipment? Our Sub!

What's the best studio advice you've been given? Get a Sub!

What's next for you? A whole lot of releases on Technique and hopefully some touring.

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BRAND NEW POLYPHONICS

NOKIA, SAMSUNG, SHARP, ERICSSON MOTOROLA, & PANASONIC

941055	TEEBEE	WAREHOUSE	PHOTEK RECORDS
941054	DJ HYPE	PEACE LOVE AND UNITY	TRUE PLAYAZ
941053	CONCORD DAWN	DONT TELL ME	TIMELESS
941052	SHY FX & T-POWER	MURDERATION	EBONY DUBSTERS
941040	SHY FX & T-POWER	RA	EBONY DUBSTERS
941048	BARON	THE WAY IT WAS	VIRUS
941043	INFRARED CREW	PITBULL	INFRARED RECORDS
941038	JOHN B	BLANDWAGON POOS	WHITE
941039	CLIPZ	FUNK PHYSICS	FULL CYCLE
941040	EBONY DUBSTERS	RA	EBONY
941041	DJ HAZARD	READY 4 THIS	GANJA RECORDS
941042	TOTAL SCIENCE	NOSHER	CIA
941043	INFRARED CREW	PITBULL	INFRARED
941031	ADAM F	ORIGINAL JUNGLE SOUND	BREAKBEAT KAOS
941033	BARON & TOTAL SCIENCE	MONKEY SEE	CIA
941034	HAZARD & DEVISE	YOU DON'T KNOW WHO DID THIS	WHITE
941035	LEMON D	GENERATION X	VALVE
941036	DJ FRICTION	ROBOCOP	TRUE PLAYAZ
941011	MOVING FUSION	LAZY BONES VIP	RAM
941010	MOVING FUSION	CHILLI PEPPER REMIX	RAM
941847	TALI	HIGH HOPES	FULL CYCLE
941845	RESONANT EVIL	TROUBLESHOOT	RENEGADE HARDWARE
941843	GIL FELIX VS INFRARED	CAPOEIRA	INFRARED
941842	EZ ROLLERS	CROWD ROCKER	INTERCOM
941841	DJ FRESH	DALICKS	BREAKBEAT KAOS
941840	DILLINJA	FAST CAR	VALVE
941915	ZINC VS FUGEES	READY OR NOT	WHITE
941914	DISTORTED MINDS	OUCH (FT MC FOXY)	D-STYLE
941913	BAD COMPANY	BULLET TIME	BC RECORDINGS
941012	MOVING FUSION	REALITY REMIX	RAM
941013	MOVING FUSION	ROLL DA BASS	RAM
941846	SHY FX	FEELIN YOU	POSITIVA
941848	TWISTED INDIVIDUAL	HAND GRENADE	FORMATION

BEST SELLING POLYPHONIC TONES

940628	ANDY C & SHIMON	BODYROCK	RAM
940635	BASSLINE SMITH	JUNGLIST	TECHNIQUE
940636	DANNY C	MEXICAN	PORTICA
940643	DISTORTED MINDS	WARRIORS	FORMATION
940644	DISTORTED MINDS	T10	KAOS
940645	DJ HAZARD	EVAQ8	TRUE PLAYAZ
940646	DJ HAZARD	RUBBER CHICKEN	TRUE PLAYAZ
940648	DJ SS (DJ HAZARD REMIX)	THOSE DJS	FORMATION
940657	EZ ROLLERS	WALK THIS LAND	MOVING SHADOW
940664	HIGH CONTRAST	BASEMENT TUNE	HOSPITAL
940665	JOHN B	PRESSURE (REMIX)	FORMATION
940666	LAYO & BUSHWACKA	LOVE STORY (B-KEY REMIX)	XL
940667	MAMPI SWIFT & FRESH	PLAY ME	CHARGE
940669	MINDMACHINE & EPSILON	BARCELONA	BC AUTHORISED
940670	MIST	3AM	SOUL:R
940671	MIST	OUTER SPACE	SOUL:R
940676	PENDULUM	BACK TO YOU	TIMELESS
940677	PENDULUM	VAULT	31 RECORDS
940678	PHOTEK	THE END	PHOTEK PROD
940694	TWISTED INDIVIDUAL	BANDWAGON BLUES	FORMATION
940695	UN-CUT	MIDNIGHT	M RECORDS

DRUM&BASSARENA RECOMMENDED
BODYROCK - RAM
940628 (POLYPHONIC)
ANDY C & SHIMON

THE TOP 3 TONES

POLYPHONIC ONLY

1.	941915	Zinc Vs Fugees	Ready Or Not 03 mix	white
2.	941843	Gil Felix vs Infrared	Capoeira	Infrared
3.	941840	Dillinja	Fast Car	Valve

BEST SELLING POLYPHONIC TONES

BAD COMPANY			
940629	BAD COMPANY	THE HORNET	BC RECORDINGS
940630	BAD COMPANY	TORPEDO	BC RECORDINGS
940631	BAD COMPANY	NITROUS (REMIX)	BC RECORDINGS
940632	BAD COMPANY	PULSE	PROTOTYPE
940633	BAD COMPANY	SNOWCATS	BC RECORDINGS
940634	BAD COMPANY	PLANET DUST	PROTOTYPE
DILLINJA			
940638	DILLINJA	TWIST 'EM OUT	RENEGADE HARDWARE
940639	DILLINJA	TWIST EM OUT (DYLAN REMIX)	RENEGADE HARDWARE
940640	DILLINJA	WARNING	VALVE
940641	DILLINJA	HOW DARE YOU	VALVE
940642	DILLINJA	TWIST EM OUT (FRESH REMIX)	RENEGADE HARDWARE
FRESH			
940658	FRESH	ELM STREET	RAM
940659	FRESH	SHINOBI	RAM
940660	FRESH	SWITCH	RAM
940661	FRESH	WITHOUT YOU	RAM
940662	FRESH	BIG LOVE	RAM
940663	FRESH	SIGNAL	RAM
RONI SIZE			
940683	RONI SIZE	SOUND ADVICE	FULL CYCLE
940684	RONI SIZE	BROWN PAPER BAG	TALKIN LOUD
940685	RONI SIZE	PLAYTIME	FULL CYCLE
940686	RONI SIZE	TRUST ME	TALKIN LOUD
940687	RONI SIZE	SNAPSHOT 3	FULL CYCLE
940688	RONI SIZE	JAZZ THING	V RECS
SHY FX			
940689	SHY FX	WOLF	EBONY
940690	SHY FX	SHAKE UR BODY	POSITIVA
940691	SHY FX	ORIGINAL NUTTAH	SOUR
DJ ZINC			
940649	DJ ZINC	SUPER SHARP SHOOTER	GANJA
941032	DJ ZINC	HIDDEN TRACK	POLYDOR
940651	DJ ZINC	FREENOTE	TRUE PLAYAZ
940652	DJ ZINC	SKA	TRUE PLAYAZ
940697	DJ ZINC	CASINO ROYALE (REMIX)	TRUE PLAYAZ

JUNGLE POLYPHONICS

940627	ADAM F	CIRCLES	F JAMS
940637	DEEP BLUE	HELICOPTER TUNE	MOVING SHADOW
940647	DJ SS	LIGHTER	FORMATION
940672	NOOKIE	SOUND OF MUSIC	REINFORCED
940673	OMNI TRIO	THRU THE VIBE	MOVING SHADOW
940674	OMNI TRIO	RENEGADE SNARES	MOVING SHADOW
940675	PASCAL	P FUNK ERA	TRUE PLAYAZ
940680	RAY KEITH	TERRORIST	MOVING SHADOW
940681	RAY KEITH	CHOPPER (SHY FX REMIX)	DREAD
940696	UNKNOWN	PAPEA NEW GUINEA	WHITE

WAP SERVICES MUST BE ENABLED TO DOWNLOAD POLYPHONIC TONES AND COLOUR BACKGROUNDS

COLOUR BACKGROUNDS

NOKIA, SHARP, MOTOROLA, PANASONIC & ERICSSON

941877	941878	941879	941880
940981	940972	941008	941000
941030	941881	940967	940970
940966	940963	940978	940977
940969	940984	941005	941007
940986	940987	940988	940989
940980	940964	940998	940990
940999	940968	940965	940983
940975	940974	940976	940973

BRAND NEW MONO TONES

NOKIA, SAMSUNG, MOTOROLA & SAGEM

941049	SHY FX & T-POWER	RA	EBONY DUBSTERS
941037	ADAM F	ORIGINAL JUNGLE SOUND	BREAKBEAT KAOS
941911	DISTORTED MINDS	OUCH (FT MC FOXY)	D STYLE
941912	ZINC VS FUGEES	READY OR NOT	WHITE
941910	BAD COMPANY	BULLET TIME	BC RECORDINGS
940848	Q PROJECT	CHAMPION SOUND	ALLIANCE REMIX WHITE
940867	ANDY C & SHIMON	BODY ROCK	RAM
940915	CAPONE	TWIST 'EM OUT	RENEGADE HARDWARE
940841	DJ HYPE	TRUE PLAYAZ ANTHEM	TRUE PLAYAZ
940892	ED RUSH & OPTICAL	PACMAN	VIRUS
940898	DJ MARKY + XRS	LK (CAROLINA CAROL BELLA)	VIRUS
940828	DJ SS	LIGHTER	FORMATION
940906	ORIGIN UNKNOWN	VALLEY OF THE SHADOWS	RAM
940842	DJ HYPE FEAT. MC FATS	PEACE LOVE UNITY	
940914	HIGH CONTRAST	RETURN OF FOREVER	HOSPITAL
940932	TALI	LYRIC ON MY LIP	FULL CYCLE
940884	ADAM F	BRAND NEW FUNK	
940877	KOSHEEN	HIDE U	WHITE
940881	OMNI TRIO	RENEGADE SNARES	MOVING SHADOW

BEST SELLING MONO TONES

BAD COMPANY			
940940	BAD COMPANY	TORPEDOES	BC RECORDINGS
940887	BAD COMPANY	LADIES OF SPAIN	BC RECORDINGS
940863	BAD COMPANY	DOGS ON THE MOON	BC RECORDINGS
940830	BAD COMPANY & TRACE	SON OF NITROUS	BC RECORDINGS
940918	BAD COMPANY	HORNET	BC RECORDINGS
940865	BAD COMPANY	THE PULSE	BC RECORDINGS
940854	BAD COMPANY	PLANET DUST	BC RECORDINGS
940844	BAD COMPANY	SPEEDBALL	BC RECORDINGS
DILLINJA			
940861	DILLINJA	NASTY WAYZ	LONDON
940860	DILLINJA	BLAZE IT DOWN	LONDON
940856	DILLINJA	ALL ABOARD	LONDON
RONI SIZE			
940933	RONI SIZE	BROWN PAPER BAG	TALKIN LOUD
940913	RONI SIZE	PLAYTIME	FULL CYCLE
940847	REPRAZENT	HI POTENT	TALKIN LOUD
940836	REPRAZENT	TRUST ME	TALKIN LOUD
940829	RONI SIZE	SNAPSHOT	FULL CYCLE
SHY FX			
940891	SHY FX & T POWER	SHAKE UR BODY	POSITIVA
940885	SHY FX	ORIGINAL NUTTAH	SOUR
940878	SHY FX	WOLF	EBONY
940846	RAY KEITH	CHOPPER (SHY FX REMIX)	DREAD
940834	SHY FX	FUNKIN' DEM UP (KRUST REMIX)	EBONY
DJ ZINC			
941912	ZINC VS FUGEES	READY OR NOT	WHITE
940902	DJ ZINC	SKA	TRUE PLAYAZ
940895	DJ ZINC	FAIR FIGHT	TRUE PLAYAZ
940886	DJ ZINC	SUPER SHARP SHOOTER	GANJA
940876	DJ ZINC	174 TREK	TRUE PLAYAZ
940866	DJ ZINC	CASINO ROYALE	TRUE PLAYAZ

PICTURE MESSAGES

NOKIA, SAMSUNG

940707	940716	940717
940709	940713	940714

OPERATOR LOGOS

NOKIA, SAMSUNG

940720	940734	940780
940737	940735	940729
940771	940723	940746
940748	940728	940772
940754	940730	940747
940742	940743	

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COLOUR BACKGROUNDS
NOKIA 3100, 3200, 3300, 3510I, 3560, 3595, 3650, 5100, 5140, 5300, 6100, 6200, 6220, 6310I, 6230, 6610, 6650, 6800, 6810, 6820, 7200, 7600, 7600, 7210, 7250, 7650, NGAGE MOTOROLA T722, T1720I, E365 SAMSUNG S300, P400 SONY ERICSSON R520, P800, T300, T68, T68I SHARP GX10, GX20 PANASONIC GD87, G50, G60 SIEMENS MC60

MONO TONES
NOKIA 2100, 3210, 3310, 3330, 3390, 3410, 3585, 3590, 5210, 5510, 6110, 6150, 6510, 6210, 6250, 6310, 6310I, 640, 650, 6510, 6590, 7110, 81XX, 8210, 8310, 8810, 8850/90, 8910, 8910I, 9000/9110, 9210/9210I, NK702 MOTOROLA T191, TIMEPORT 250, TIMEPORT 260, V100, V50, V8088 SONY ERICSSON R520, T20E, T39, T68I SAGEM MC930, MC932/MW932, MC936, MC939, MC940, MC942, MC946, MC949, MC950, MC952, MC956, MC959, MW3020 SAMSUNG N500, N600, N620, Q100, R210, S100, SGH-600, SGH-620, SGH-T100, V200,

OPERATOR LOGOS
NOKIA 2100, 3210,3310, 3330, 3390, 3410, 3510, 3585, 3590, 5110, 5210, 5510, 6110, 6150, 6210, 6250, 6310, 6310I, 640, 650, 6510, 6590I, 7110, 7210, 7250, 81XX, 8210, 8310, 8810, 8850/90, 8910, 9000/9110, NK402, NK702 SAMSUNG N600, N620, Q100, R210, S100, SGH-600, SGH-620, SGH-T100, V200

PICTURE MESSAGES
NOKIA 2100, 3210, 3300, 3310, 3330, 3390, 3410, 3510, 3510I, 3585, 3590, 3650, 5100, 5210, 5510, 6100, 6110, 6150, 6210, 6220, 6250, 6310, 6310I, 6510, 6590I, 6610, 6650, 6800, 7210, 7250, 8210, 8310, 8850/90, 8910, 8910I SAMSUNG N500, N600, N620, Q100, R210, S100, SGH-600, SGH-620, SGH-T100, V200

RED ONE

words: Mark OD
photo: Jamie Simonds

Behind every record label there's a manager who manages to juggles a million things at once, keeping the whole operation ticking like clockwork and ensuring everyone is kept sweet.

Ram Records' label boss is the multi-talented Red One. His work load includes looking after Ram and its sister labels Liftin Spirits, Frequency and Hi-Lite, so a typical day means, "coming in making sure everything's running correct, making sure everyone is happy and keeping everyone happy, once that's sorted I try and get in the studio."

Originally hailing from South Ockendon in Essex, Scott Bourne aka Red One nurtured his passion for dance music by staging his own parties. Assuming the Red One moniker as a DJ, he began playing at events at Essex's Berwick Manor at the age of 17. Preceding a stint at pirate station, Cyndicut FM, Scott began organising underground parties as Red One Productions at the Bishopsgate Institute in London's City area. These sporadic raves in '91 eventually came to an end owing to licensing problems, but were among the first parties where he was to book burgeoning DJ and close friend, Andy C to play to crowds of up to 1000. Subsequently he got involved in promotional work for the likes of Innovation and Elevation.

A mean producer in his own right, there's not enough hours in the day for him to spend as much time as he'd like in the studio, but he still squeezes it in whenever he can. "I get in the studio as and when really, in the evenings, or when I drop the wife off in the morning."

If you rewind to 1995 he'd already paid his dues as a promoter / DJ on the jungle rave circuit, when he made his production debut on Liftin Spirits with the massive "The Futurist" b/w "Alive & Kicking". At the time he was number crunching in a bank, but took the gamble to go full-time with his long-time friend Andy C at Ram - its paid dividends ever since.

Red has never been a prolific producer due to the constant demands on his time; his tunes have always been a case of quality over quantity. The mutant funk of "Hard Edge" for example on the seminal Sound In Motion LP was a winner as was "Strangled Duck" (Liftin Spirits). More recently "Don't Stop" and "Sweet Music" were pure dancefloor destruction. He's currently sitting on a few fresh pieces like "Pump Up The Volume" for the new Ram Raiders Vol 5 EP.

The recent installments of the champion Ram Raider series only serve to enforce that when it comes to the dancefloor the label is in a league of its own. How do they manage to stay on the cutting-edge? "There's a lot of factors, obviously the producers, people know when they are getting one of the artists they're representing the whole Ram family. Then Andy being Andy, doing what he does as a DJ, his stature pushes the sound forward.

"We're approaching our twelfth year and our fourty-eighth release with the Ram Raiders Part 4, he continues. "That's on average four releases a year, there are a lot of tracks that get left by the wayside. This is our job; this is our life, when it comes to quality control we don't rest on our laurels."

There,s plenty to come on the camp's other labels with Concept 2's "Discology" floating around on Liftin Spirits and loads of beats due on Red & Andy's joint ventures Frequency & Hi-Lite. Frequency is definitely the feeder for Ram, breaking new artists before they graduate onto bigger things. Artists like Sub Focus, Nightbreed, D-Ecco & Sabotage make up the current roster, "we've got our artists for the label now" he explains, "so we want to build the crew vibe like on Ram." As for the more 'musical' Hi-Lite label, "I've got some really good releases lined-up. Nightbreed have done a really good musical bit and there's a couple of things from Outfit that are amazing that'll be coming out later in the year."

DJ / Producer / Label Manager, Red One's a key industry figure and his bread and butter is being affected by the downloading of ripped tunes from the Net. "It doesn't give the music the respect it deserves," he insists. "There's not a lot of money to be made making tunes, the artists are putting a lot of time in the studio and they're losing sales with people downloading their tunes rather than buying them." But he's making sure they're not going to be left behind in the technological stakes. "We've got digital distributor's lined-up for LTD edition downloads - It doesn't mean we're going to stop doing vinyl - everyone's going to have to do it, you can't deny the future."

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BARON

words: Mark OD

For up and coming producers breaking through and making their mark on the scene is as important as the air they breathe. Talented producers can knock on the door but unless they come up with something special they'll never break through to the other side.

24 year old Piers Bailey aka Baron's defining door-battering moment came last year when he remixed Total Science's dancefloor knees-up 'Nosher'. This turned him from promising new talent into instant hot property. It was the catalyst for him to go, "from making a few little roller things to making everyone stand up and take notice," he explains. His phone's not stopped ringing since.

Based just north of Oxford he describes his home as "a tiny little nothing in the middle of nowhere." His entry point into drum and bass came when he felt the rock music he loved as a lad had become a bit stale and he was turned onto drum and bass by stuff like Ed Rush & Optical and the No-U-Turn sound. Getting a job at Massive Records helped put him in touch with local headz like DJ Lee, Brillo and Total Science, through Brillo he scored a DJ apprenticeship at the legendary Source night at the Zodiac and his early productions emerged on Digital's L-Plates.

Total Science encouraged him to move from club DJ to studio producer. "The reason I'm here is because of Total Science, they're the people who pushed me and told me to get a studio, they're my mates," he says appreciatively. "Quiff told me to get all the same equipment that he'd got, I'd make a tune go round to test it and do a mix down, that's how I learnt to mix down so quickly."

The story behind the Nosher remix is quite a simple one. "They just gave me a sample CD and I went away did it and they were like yeah this is a fucking good tune. It was Easter weekend and we went down to Movement." Nights out with TS are X-rated! "When we go out we get hammered, it's messy, fucking mental, they're animals. Anyway Andy C had cut it, played it at Rumba and it went off! It inspired me to do more dancefloor stuff, if I hadn't done that I definitely wouldn't have done the Virus thing."

There's an obvious sense of achievement in Baron's voice when he mentions his Virus debut. "For me Virus is the big one, it's a big fucking label. I always knew with Ed & Optical it would be a select two tracks - it's got to smash it up and they've got to be into it." 'The Way It Was' b/w 'Redhead' surprised a few people when it broke, a distinct change in direction for the label, both tunes smash the 'floor with a highly evolved feel to them.

With his confidence at an all-time high, Baron saw his window of opportunity come into view last year. The time had come to launch his label. "I felt like it was the best time to do it. Last year I made loads of tracks and through nobody's fault, they all came out within a month of each other which really pissed me off and if there's five Baron tracks in the shops the kids are going to buy the best two. Also I wanted to push what I was doing. I was aware that people in the scene like Clipz and Twisted were signed up with people, if you pick up a Clipz release on Full Cycle you know what you're going to get its good. I wanted people to be able pick up a Baron release and do the same."

Luckily he'd been in the studio with Quiff & Smithy and the boys gave him their blessing to use the tracks for the Baron Inc label. It was the perfect opportunity for me to kickstart my label," he says. Making the trademark beats for 'Monkey See, Monkey Do' provided plenty of joke. "It was funny," he admits. "It was constant banter so it was quite hard to concentrate. They work very fast and they're very much on their own vibe in the studio, pratting around and making up stupid dances. I was happy when the two tunes came out," he says with a hint of relief.

Baron Inc 001 has surpassed the 4000 unit mark, an exceptional amount for the first release. Recently the second rub 'Squelch' b/w 'Deadless 5' has continued the bouncy label vibe and its been getting plenty of rotation from the A-list. Baron's gameplan for the label is, "to push 12 inches as far as I can, I want to bring some other artists in and I definitely want to do some Baron Inc nights, maybe even with Friction's new label Shogun."

As for releases on other labels, "there's going to be another Virus 12 this year I think and I'd like to do something for Breakbeat Kaos, I think that's the new Prototype, its huge. And there will definitely be some stuff for TOV this year - Clayton has helped me a lot, he adds reflecting the fact he's not forgotten about the impact his 'Effortless Chic' / 'School Disco' TOV release.

Unsurprisingly after the success of 'Nosher 'everybody wants a piece of his remix skills. "I've done one for Twisted for the Grid LP, one for Futurebound for Viper, and 'Kerbcrawler' for Ed & Optical which got 3 rewinds at the Virus party in Miami!" But more surprisingly he hasn't got an agent for UK DJ bookings, so anyone who is interested better fix up and look sharp before the door slams shut.

Bookings: baronincorporated@yahoo.com

Email: baron2k@aol.com

global dj charts

john b

01	castor	emily	nu-electro
02	john b	in:transit lp	beta
03	fresh	hooded	dub
04	exile	multistep dremel adaptor	dub
05	concord dawn	salmonella dub rmx	dub
06	klone	sapphire	dub
07	fanu	last solo before dawn	dub
08	tech itch	take the stone	dub
09	optiv feat bsee	release me	dub
10	john b	midnight air	dub

dj ink

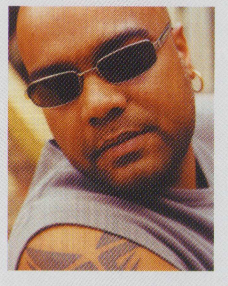
01	loxy & keaton	haters	hardware
02	dj ink	b-boy convention	dub
03	pendulum	minds eye	hardware
04	raiden	reaktor vip	dub
05	digital	informer	phantom audio
06	kontrol & fuze	007 special	dub
07	dj ink & dj loxy	straight up menave vip	hardware
08	dylan & loxy	fraggle rock (raiden rmx)	dub
09	fifth element	stone cold	architecture
10	kontrol	born	architecture

high contrast

01	high contrast	lovesick	hospital
02	total science	whistles	dub
03	logistics	together	hospital
04	a.i	silicone valley	31
05	calibre & zero tolerance	one word	dub
06	nu:tone	you're all i need	hospital
07	influx uk	ghost people 2004	formation
08	high contrast	twilights last gleaming	hospital
09	syncopix	happy happy joy joy	hospital
10	sonic	retrothruster	space

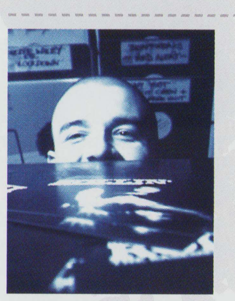
dj lee

01	high contrast	lovesick	dub
02	d kay	in my soul	dub
03	influx uk	ghost people 2004	formation
04	a.i	sillicone valley	dub
05	calibre	drop it down	dub
06	dj die	autumn (commix rmx)	liquid v
07	q-project	voices	dub
08	ed rush & optical	compound (gridlok rmx)	dub
09	matrix	untitled	dub
10	fierce & fresh	innocence (keaton & hive rmx)	dub



mickey finn

01	nicol & majistrate	yankee doodle	takeover
02	friction	hi-tek rmx	charge
03	generation dub	hawaii 5-0	dub
04	majistrate	8th day	takeover
05	zinc	stepping stone	dub
06	pendulum	another planet	kaos
07	krust	follow a vision	dub
08	beenie man	boot	dub
09	kenny ken & mickey finn	fire rmx	labello
10	nicol & majistrate	pink shirt poofta	urban takeover



bassline smith

01	drumsound & bassline	odyssey	prototype
02	fresh	tombraider	d.o.a.
03	roni size	shoulder to shoulder	dub
04	drumsound & bassline	sucker	dub
05	dillinja	just relax	beatz
06	sub focus	acid test	dub
07	hazard	wonkey donkey	dub
08	skyver & d jon	analytic	dub
09	skc	struggle	dub
10	drumsound & bassline	crossfire	space

pendulum

01	pendulum	masochist	dub
02	subfocus	acid test	frequency
03	chris su & skc	desert siege	comm suicide
04	ed rush & optical	kerbcrawler (baron rmx)	virus
05	fresh	unknown	kaos
06	muffler	showdown	dub
07	bassline & drumsound	odyssey	prototype
08	total science	no 1	dub
09	future cut	20/20 (chase & status rmx)	dub
10	hype	foundation rmx	playaz

ruffstuff

01	bassline & drumsound	odyssey	prototype
02	roni size	cheeky monkey	v
03	fresh	tomb raider	doa
04	shimon & spa funk	cold killa	ram
05	die & clipz	we got the funk	full cycle
06	fresh	floodlight	d.o.a
07	clipz	funk physics vip	full cycle
08	roni size	come and play	v
09	keaton & loxy	haters	hardware
10	calibre & fats	drop it down	dub

ray keith

01	ray keith	yes yes rmx	dread
02	s man	riot gear	penny black
03	roni size	stricly social (nu:tone rmx)	liquid v
04	xample & sol	in session	penny black
05	serum	special technique rmx	dread
06	calibre	pu:r	soul r
07	unknown	revolution	target
08	unknown	changes	786 recs
09	dj zinc	stepping stones	bingo
10	ray keith	decade of dread pt 1	dread

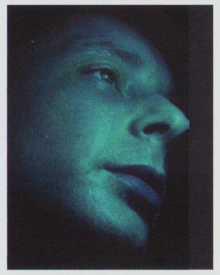
nicky blackmarket

01	total science	untitled	headz
02	ray keith	missing cuban	dread
03	dl ft hyper d	move your body (soc sec rmx)	dub
04	phantasy / shodan / apache	gimme de gal	ganja
05	marky	snagglepuss	dub
06	social security	caped crusader	dub
07	roni size	cheeky monkey	dub
08	zinc	stepping stones	bingo
09	dj ss	anger management	formation
10	the force	cattlepod	urban takeover

global dj charts

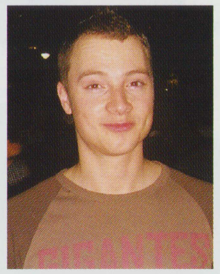
ez rollers

01	bassline & drumsound	odyssey	prototype
02	system d	heres the power	intercom
03	friction	bogeyman	playaz
04	alliance	jive	intercom
05	body and soul	something wrong	intercom
06	dist minds & ez rollers	roadrage	d-style
07	tommy knocker	dirty sluts	intercom
08	concord dawn	unreal	dub
09	xample	in session	intercom
10	the force	prophet	intercom



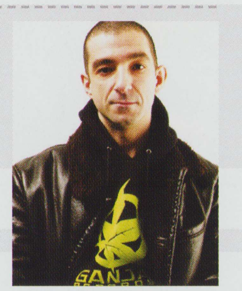
friction

01	dillinja	in the grind	valve
02	calibre & st files	red light	soul:r
03	bassline & drumsound	odyssey	prototype
04	fission & subwave	conformist	transparent
05	total science	defcom 69	metalheadz
06	dylan & loxy	fraggle rock (raiden rrmx)	hardware
07	friction & nu balance ft shanie	soul surfer	valve
08	kryptic minds	hide the tears rmx	metalheadz
09	futurebound	blind cobblers thumb (baron rmx)	viper
10	breakage	so mars	bassbin



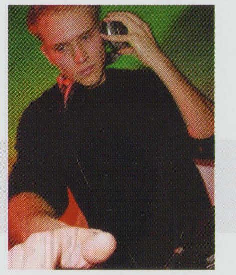
dj hype

01	hype & j majik	dubplate killa	dub
02	shodan, phantasy & apache	gimme de gal	dub
03	fresh	tombraider	dub
04	dillinja	forgotten dreams	dub
05	potential bad boy	dem talkin	dub
06	ram trilogy	cold killer	dub
07	dj hazard	wonkey donkey	dub
08	nightwalker	head nod	dub
09	pascal	p funk (moving fusion rmx)	dub
10	dj friction & nu balance	again & again	dub



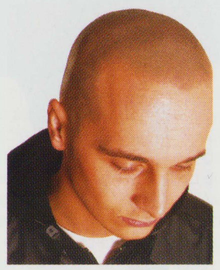
d kay

01	bassline & drumsound	odyssey	prototype
02	ill skillz vs concord dawn	unreal	hardware
03	d kay & dj lee	rain	dub
04	d kay & marcus intalex	transition	dub
05	dom & roland	moulin (dslboy & kaos rmx)	shadow
06	ill skillz	fusion dance (klute rmx)	illskillz
07	calibre	guitar	dub
08	d kay	lion dub	bingo
09	d kay	martians part 2	dub
10	dom & roland	future life	shadow



black sun empire

01	calyx & teebee	follow the leader	dub
02	black sun empire	driving insane	bse
03	cause 4 concen	trakker	bc
04	kemal	gene sequence (bse rmx)	dub
05	optiv & bse	insiders	dub
06	tech itch	pressure drop (kryptic minds rmx)	dub
07	corruptd souls	the machines	moving shadow
08	rawthang	headbutt	dub
09	tech itch	hunterseeker	tech itch
10	kemal & bse	stranded	cryptic audio



calibre

01	calibre	mr maverick	signature
02	high contrast	lovesick	hospital
03	a.i	switched on	dub
04	calibre & mc fats	drop that bass	signature
05	calibre & zero tolerance	one word	dub
06	skc & bratwa	heart of love	hospital
07	logistics	together	dub
08	m.i.s.t & high contrast	do it	soul:r
09	bc uk	true romance	metalheadz
10	marky & xrs	soul samba	innerground

nu tone

01	logistics	together	hospital
02	calibre	p.u.r	revolv:r
03	nu:tone	is it alive	dub
04	high contrast	twilights last gleaming	hospital
05	commix	roots train	hospital
06	logistics	hold on be strong	dub
07	nu:tone	you're all i need	hospital
08	dj die	autmn (commix rmx)	liquid v
09	nu:tone	ebb & flo	soul:r
10	calibre	cold halo	revolv:r

the cartel

01	cartel	watched	dub
02	future prophecies	dready	dub
03	concord dawn	tonite (pendulum rmx)	dub
04	ed rush & optical	compound (gridlok rmx)	dub
05	hive	last call	dub
06	infiltrata	crooked cops	dub
07	zinc	stepping stones	dub
08	c4c	paranormal	dub
09	gridlok & ecco	structure	dub
10	total science	loose ends	dub

keaton

01	various	school of hard knocks	hardware
02	keaton & manifest	i dont give a fuck	dub
03	various	holding room ep	quarantine
04	keaton & hive	twisted 3rd mind rmx	headz
05	keaton	still invisible	dub
06	unknown	no more ghosts	lockdown
07	keaton & loxy	the jump off	dub
08	kaos & karl k	moulin rouge rmx	shadow
09	dom & roland	i 4 an i	shadow
10	subfocus	acid test	frequency

baron

01	baron	monkey see monkey do rmx	baron inc
02	fresh	floodlight	kaos
03	baron	squelch	baron inc
04	ed rush & optical	compound (gridlok rmx)	virus
05	futurebound	blind cobblers (baron rmx)	viper
06	friction	bogeyman	playaz
07	zen	turnstyle (baron rmx)	grid
08	pendulum	another planet	kaos
09	zinc	stepping stones	bingo
10	dillinja	dunne	v

words: **JHO Oakley**
photo: **Jamie Simonds**

BC UK

2004 is destined to be another massive year for drum&bass' most prominent collective, Bad Company UK. Aside from having several huge singles scheduled for release on some of the mightiest labels in existence, ATM can exclusively reveal that the collective are putting the finishing touches on what will be their fifth artist album 'Bad Taste'. ATM can also announce the planned launch of yet another but altogether different label from the collective, BC Presents...

Although Bad Company UK should need no introduction, for the sorry few that have managed to miss the whole thing, here's a summary of their unique success story. The story really began in 1999 when Fresh, Vegas, Maldini and D-Bridge decided to join forces and become the soon to be legendary urban underground dance music collective, Bad Company UK. Their first release 'The Nine', now a highly collectable 12", went straight to number 1 in the BBC Radio 1 drum&bass chart and had to be re-pressed four times to meet demand. 'The Nine' held its position in the chart for 3 weeks and is still faithfully being played by top DJ's five years on. In 2002 'The Nine' was voted for by 150,000 people on the Drum and Bass Arena web site as the number 1 drum&bass tune of all time. It is also important to note that Bad Company UK holds the number 3 position in the same chart for the brilliant 'Planet Dust' and as if that wasn't enough the Bad Company UK boys themselves were also voted number 1 producers! Their first award winning album, 'Inside the Machine' (Knowledge Magazine Album of the Year 2000) met critical acclaim when it was released in 2000. Their second long player 'Digital Nation' was met with similar acclaim and was soon followed by the immense 'Book of the Bad' series, which proved that there was no stopping their uncompromising talents. If it hadn't been done already, Bad Company UK's most recent album 'Shot Down On Safari' cemented their well-deserved place at the top of drum&bass' hierarchy.

After an abundance of grimy underground hits on BC Recordings, several of which unexpectedly graced the top 50 of the UK national chart, in 2003 Bad Company UK began the year by producing their first mainstream targeted project; featuring a battering of bashment reggae style vocals, 'Mo-Fire' smashed its way to number 21 in the UK national chart. Shortly after, this was followed by D-Kay, Epsilon and Stamina's 'Barcelona' rocketing to Number 14 in the mainstream national chart, and remaining in the Top 20 for 4 weeks. A track that Bad Company UK had executively produced and signed to their newly formed BC Authorised label; a label which they had purposefully created as an outlet for the more viable sounds of drum&bass, with the emphasis on precise yet experimental vocals.

After proving to both themselves and their critics that they could exist proudly amongst the mainstream limelight, the Princes of darkness have been quick to return to their treasured underground. The music that Bad Company UK have both created and released since their return has been deeper, darker and deadlier than ever. It seems that the mainstream and everything it represents only fuels Bad Company UK's true creativity. The first harvest, post 'Mo-Fire' and 'Barcelona', yielded the likes of the 'Bullet Time EP'; released on their very own BC Recordings it was their final release of 2003 and their most recent release to date. After an epic intro 'Bullet Time' featured evil punctuating analogue bass twists that left evil forebodings in its trail of dance floors worldwide. D Bridge explains, 'I'm not sure what people were expecting from us, we just went into the studio, got on a vibe, and worked with the sounds we had, in this case it was a sample that had inspired us.' Vegas ads, 'with that one we just went in the studio and rolled it out.'

Other expected unreleased titles include 'True Romance' and 'Bellini' both of which are set for release on the mighty Metalheadz over the next couple of months, 'Antrim' - a collaboration with the new MC turned producer Verse, features on the 'School of Hard Knocks LP' out soon on the award winning Renegade Hardware, and the hilariously titled 'Clown Killer' is set to appear on Dylan's Technical Freaks album. D Bridge explains, 'believe it or not that one was inspired by' Vegas chuckles, 'clownstep' he continues, 'we just wanted to do a tune that represented the complete opposite of all that clownstep that was about, as a result 'Clown Killer' is a dirty dirty tune.' On hearing the above tracks, they were not darker but deeper, that's what gives BC's tunes their longer shelf life.

When questioned about other unreleased tracks ATM got told, 'we've got an album due out later this year, and we've got to hold back on some good tracks for that.' But we all know they've still got to test them out, so if you're lucky you might catch them playing them out.' The guys were happy enough to give ATM an outline of the album's general undertaking and even its title. Maldini informs us, 'we're not 100% yet but it's most likely going to be called Bad Taste.' Vegas explains, 'Like all of our previous albums, it shows where we're at right now… like a timeframe.' Although they guarantee the album will be out before the year is out, ATM is also informed, 'we're not a factory line, we're in no rush, but at the same time it's something we're actively doing.' Ok then. 'There's loads of tracks that we've done for it that we're really happy with, but we've just got to test them out a bit, and make sure that we don't want to come with anything more before we decide to put it out.' Fair enough. After a slight uncomfortable pause and a deep breath, 'any sign of Fresh on the album.' To which in succession I was categorically told, 'Yeah, yeah, yeah.' Vegas gives the details. 'There's a couple of bits from Fresh on there, 'War Games' is one of them and then there's another something that just goes off ridiculous whenever I play it.'

It was an altogether different project that the guys are currently working on that caught ATM totally off guard. D-Bridge announces, 'It's called 'Sex with Strangers' it's a project built around a great vocal' OK 'We think it's going to be an EP on BC Authorised.' ATM can report that the original mix is a house mix from 100hz, who were their debut artists with a track called 'Waterfalls' on BC Halo last year. For those of you that don't know what BC Halo is it's another label from BC, which 'pursues and promotes the emotive shades of techno and house.' Then there's a mix from BC themselves, plus a mix from Spacek and a breakbeat mix is still in the production stage. D Bridge reckons, 'Barcelona did really well, it did great things for BC Authorised, and as this project is the subsequent release on that label we're hoping that there will be a platform already there.' ATM didn't get to hear the track, though all of them appeared to be convinced that the track had what it takes to make it in the mainstream.

BC have been quick to put their experience and wisdom to good use; their contribution to bringing through virtually unknown talented artists is definitely noteworthy. Like many prevalent producers and DJs, they are continually given and the label regularly sent an abundance of unsigned tracks by eager wannabes from around the world. It's for this reason that the collective simultaneously launched Square One and BC Halo recordings. Both labels have aimed to provide platforms for music that is too good to be ignored, music that they think should in fact be brought to the masses. Square One exposes the talent found within the world of unsigned drum&bass, whilst BC Halo, as previously mentioned, pursues the best of the more rhythmically challenging and emotive shades of techno and house. Vegas spells it out, 'If we get sent good tunes from people who are out there struggling, we'll put them out.' To this date both labels have exceeded any expectations, and as promised their success has come from bringing unknown talent to the attention of the relevant dance floor, scene, industry and its hierarchy.

To add to their soon to be branded corporation, the collective have recently announced the launch of yet another but altogether different label, the well named BC Presents. A label conceived by Bad Company UK to showcase music by established artists from the drum&bass circuit. The label, that has announced release schedules which include the likes of Matrix, Sonic and C4C to name a few, promises to be a welcome addition to the creative outlets that Bad Company UK has already put into action. D Bridge explains, 'we want to put out other established artists' tunes that we're really feeling, but BC is for BC so we needed another label.' Vegas ads, 'tunes like the ones we've got coming make you feel proud to put them out.' Other unconfirmed artists that have shown interest in appearing on BC's most recent label venture include New Zealand's Concord Dawn, Austria's DKay and America's Hive. Maldini explains, 'we're not just going after one specific style either, what attracted us to these artists is that they come with their own style.' It's also important to note that with all of these projects BC aren't just putting their name to them, yes they've got the renowned Katie BC managing things, but they assure me, 'we make a point of being involved in all of it all the way.'

There was one final item that had to be discussed, Exit Recordings. We all know about the project but what was that name all about D Bridge? 'In hindsight I think that I would have called it something different, you journalists love looking into things don't you!' So? 'Basically, it's an idea I've had for a long time ever since I first visited Japan in 2000, for some reason exit signs have always caught my eye, and the plan was to have pictures of a different exit sign as the artwork for each release. That's all.'

As well as being globally recognised as a-list producers and label managers, Bad Company UK's members are undoubtedly some of the busiest DJ's on the circuit, constantly touring the globe especially the US, and appearing at all the major festivals on a regular basis. If you like hearing BC in the mix make sure you pick up their mix CD which you'll find accompanying the new album 'School of Hard Knocks' from the TOV camp.

Bad Company UK's unique story can only be described as one of unprecedented success, year after year their tunes have been enjoyed and applauded by both fans and critics alike. It's also an outstanding fact that every tune that Bad Company UK have ever released on BC Recordings has gone straight to No.1 in the BBC's drum&bass chart. You only have to go to dogsonacid.com in order to witness the effects of the shock waves that Bad Company UK's music blatantly started. Vegas confirms, 'it's like our home, it's wicked, we're on it all the time.' Originating predominantly as a message board and chat room for their fans, the site has since developed at a drastic rate in an organic like process to become the unofficial core and resource centre of drum&bass music on the Internet, whilst also achieving the status of being the biggest and busiest online dance music forum in the world!

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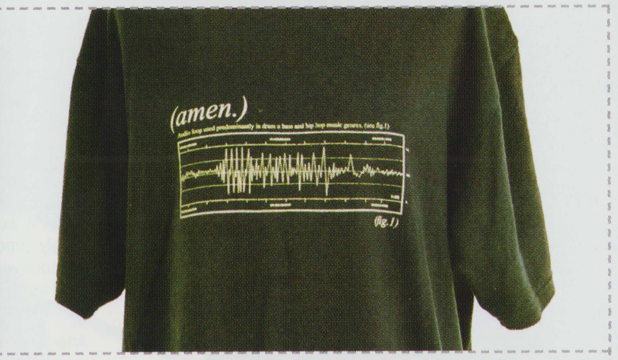

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in da lab - bulletproof studio tips

Good morning class...

1/. Lets start from the ground up shall we..?
Before you even load your sequencer, you should make sure the space where you are making tunes is as comfortable as possible. There's nothing worse than trying to make beats in a shit hole. It don't have to be the Ritz, just make sure the place isn't littered with beer bottles, used connies, or whatever else you're into...

Make sure that if you're gonna go to work, that you actually feel like getting some beats done. There's no point going in if you can't really be fucked with it at the time. Focus on what you are trying to do.

If you are making tunes on a computer (I assume most of you are), then it's best if the computer is running at its optimum. This basically means removing shit like Kazaa, AIM, games, Realplayer, etc., off the computer that you are going to work on (all of these things chew up ram and fill your registry with junk). Ideally you would have a system that is designated solely to music production. This will help towards making your system run faster and crash less, so you don't end up losing that mint new loop you just made because some prick decided to AIM you and it crashes your sequencer. Install only what you need.

It's good to play your tune to other people while it is still in the development stages (especially if you are working alone). It's easy to get a bit lost when you are working with an idea, and having someone else tell you that its dope (or shit) will make you listen a bit harder.

I aint saying send every loop you do to Virus, just ask someone what they think. Ya mum, ya girl, ya little sister, whoever. And don't be offended if they hate some part of it. You asked for their opinion, remember?

2/. Lets get technical.
Get a decent sequencer program. Ideally, use Logic Audio Platinum or Cubase SX. If you can't afford to buy either of these programs, just download a cracked version off the... You wont get arrested, I promise. Almost all of your favourite artists are using one of these two apps.

Make a template in your sequencer program. Set up it up so that when you load the program, it is ready to work with straight away. Set up your bus channels, audio and midi channels, and master so they are easy to access. You should seriously consider running 2 screens - most new graphics cards have 2 monitor outputs. If you have an older rig, you can pick up a budget PCI graphics card and an old 15" monitor for next to nothing. This will let you arrange your window on one screen and your mixer window on the other. In Logic Audio, set up the template, then save it as 'autoload.lso' in the c:\program files\emagic\logic 5\"directory]. In Cubase it's different. Read the manual :P

Start with a drum loop; it doesn't have to be the kit you're gonna use in the tune, just something you can add a bassline or riff or more percussion to; even a hat loop is OK, just to get you rollin.

Put all of your drums/perc out the same bus channel. Your drums will sound heaps better if they are all compressed together on the bus. Try the waves plugins; personally I use a DB-Audioware compressor on most of my drum channels. The Dave Brown (DB-Audioware) plugins look cheap, but they sound mint if you set the ratio and attack right.

Once you have something going, use a lowcut filter to solo the bass in the mix. Check that your kick is cutting through the bassline. Do the same with a highpass filter to check that no part of the mix appears too prominent. Ideally, listen to the mix through a couple of sets of speakers, and/or a set of decent headphones. As you get closer to mixing down, try playing the tune thru a normal hi-fi, ghetto blaster, computer speakers, etc. these kind of systems are much less forgiving than studio monitors, and any parts of your mix that are too loud or too quiet will be a lot more obvious.

Spend time on your sounds. If you have a drumloop that doesn't sound quite right, fuck with it until it does. Try tightening the release on the kit, or highpassing the hats/shakers/percussion parts of the loops. Make sure all the drums are hitting at the start of the samples if something sounds late. ALWAYS cut your drumloops up, using whole loops overtop of one another will just end up sounding loose.

Ideally, you'd leave everything in midi (or in softsynths/softsamplers) so you are able to edit any parameter at a later date. If you find your computer is lagging, or sluggish when you are trying to work on it, you may need to bounce down (render to audio file) some of your channels. Start with any sound effects/pads first, as these are the least likely to need serious reworking later on. If possible bounce them without effects so you have the option to add them later on, rather than be stuck with them on the sound.

3/. Mixdown.
Make sure you're happy with the layout. If you're mixing down, just concentrate on how the mix sounds. Most likely you'll have to come back to the layout and the mixdown again after you hear it at the club, so just get it as good as you can at the time. It's important to give your ears a rest before you do a mixdown. If you've already been working the tune for 6 hours, chances are you'll need to have a break and come back to it with a fresh set of ears to mix it down.

Compare to some tunes off CD, a reference track, something that you know sounds good in the club. Check the bass level, if there's anything in the mix that sounds raspy, too toppy etc.

Put a compressor on your master channel. In Logic, the Multipressor on the 'soft' setting will squeeze the mix together nicely. Alternatively, try the waves C4 Multiband compressor. This is just to limit the parts of the tune that will jump out too high and make the master clip. Be as gentle as possible with any effects on the master channel, as these will seriously affect the overall sound of your mix - i.e. if you compress the master too much your mix will sound terrible when its played on a P.A...

The best testing ground for your tunes is on a P.A. at the club. Try to play it, or get a friend to play it. When you hear something that loud, any fuck ups in the mix will be as plain as day. Go stand on the floor and just listen. Most people will have to go back in on a mix to get it right. After you hear it in the club, you can go in and mix it down again. Then hear it in the club again. Then mix it again if it needs it. Do this before you send your tune off to any labels, or get it cut yourself to play. If you send a good tune with a shit mix to a label, chances and they'll cringe. At Cyanide we get enough of them :P

If you think you have a good tune on the go, take your time finishing it. You'll have a much better chance of selling it on, getting paid, and buying that Lynyrd Skynyrd back catalogue that you've wanted for so long. And you'd like that, wouldn't you?

Josh @ Bulletproof / Cyanide Recordings.

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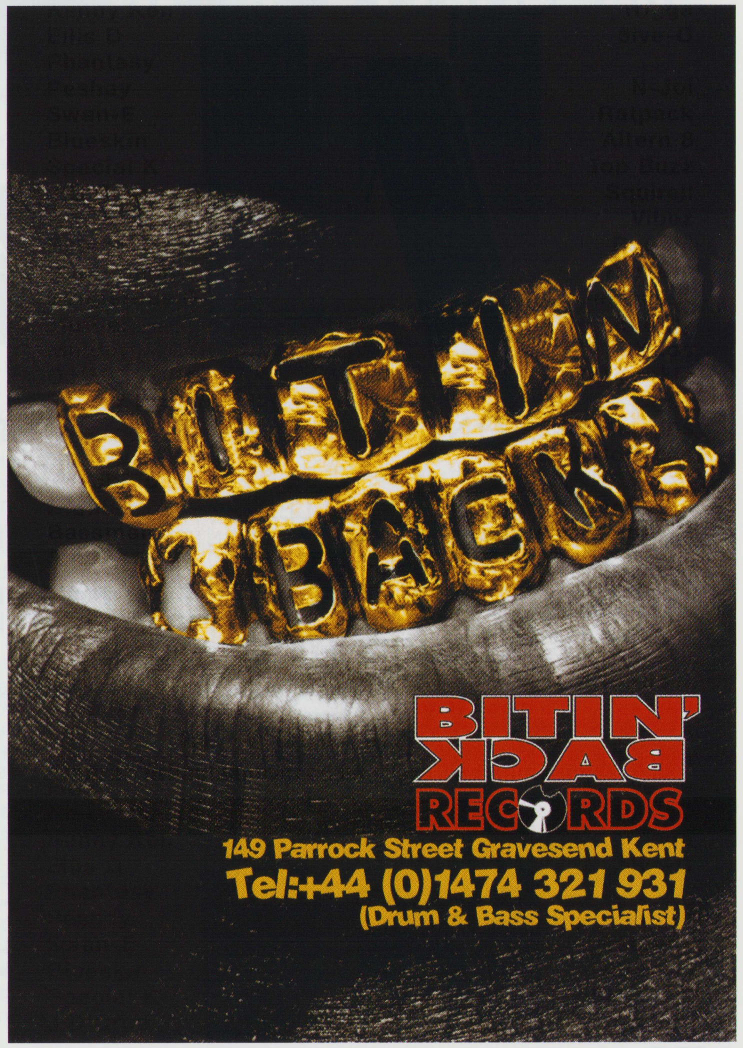

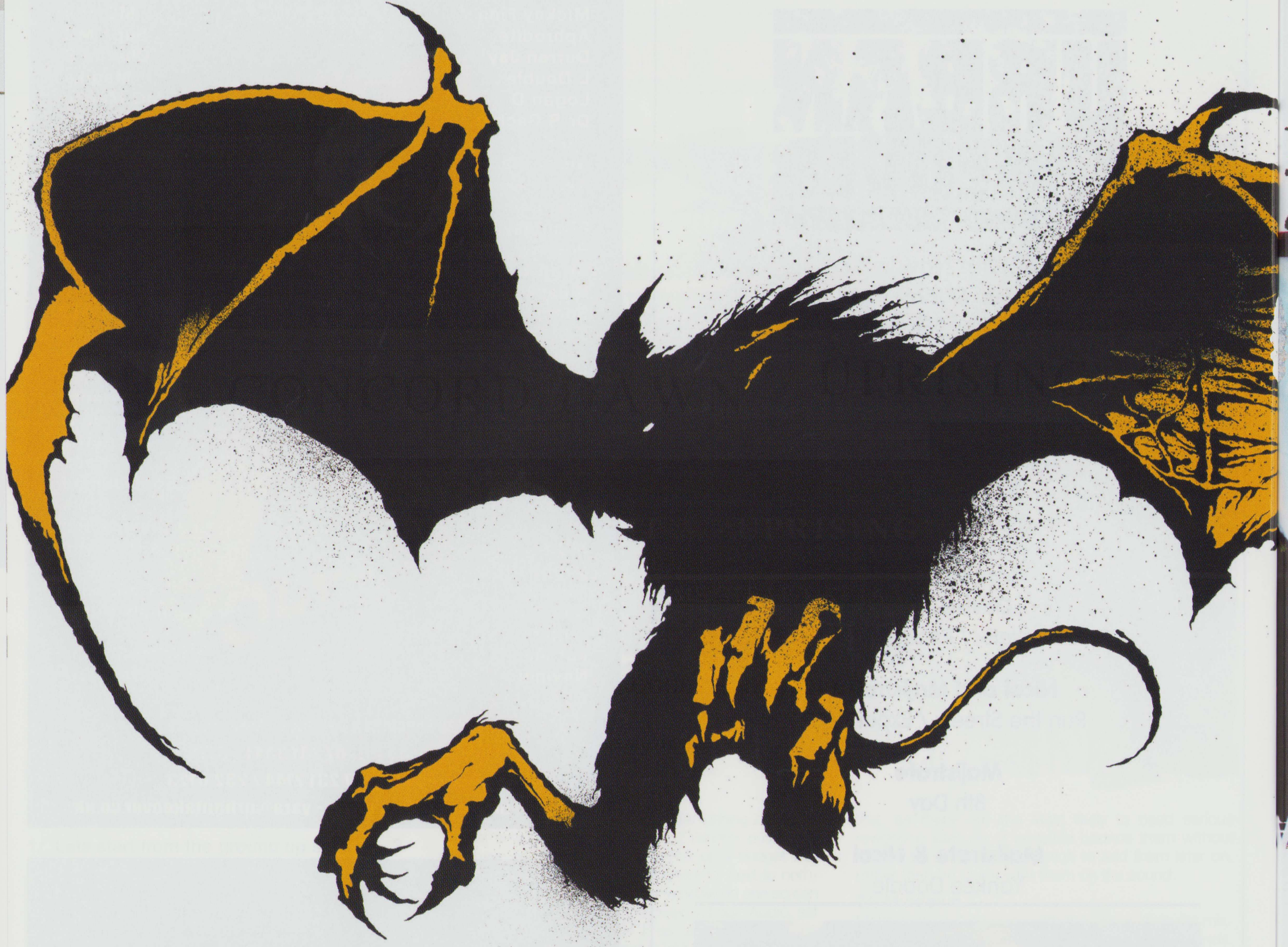

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UPRISING RECORDS

words: Jesse Keene

SWOLLEN MEMBERS

For those of you who don't know, this is not an interview with an uncomfortable illness. In fact I'm sure I can safely say any one who has been listening to hip-hop for any degree of time will be familiar with this crew. They have worked with the likes of Mix Master Mike, Everlast, Funkdoobiest and Evidence of Dilated Peoples not to mention crossing the seas to our fair shores to do tracks with DJ Vadim. So you can see why you would be hard pressed not to notice the movements of your speakers shaking to at least one Swollen Members classic at some point in time. Lately they have been putting in the studio time to bring us the new album, 'Heavy', which is set to cause more than just a stir in the world of Hip Hop. With hard-hitting beats and dark rhymes infused with a slightly warped sense of humour Swollen Members are back. We managed to catch up with Prevail early morning in a L.A. hotel. Here's what he had to say on all things Swollen, enjoy…

Since the group has been about you've worked with a wide range of artists, have you considered them as personal influences to you or are there other sources of inspiration which you consider important to the music that you make?

Prevail: I personally grew up listening to a lot of rock music, it played a big part in my life as it was every where when I was growing up, from being on the radio at home to being played at the venues we were going to as kids. I think that it comes through in the way we do our music. We try to touch on the more real and darker elements of life and that just comes from listening to heartfelt artists like James Taylor all the way through to Bon Scott and AC/DC, you know. But I guess from a hip hop perspective we have been able to work with the people that I would consider as having an influence on me, people like Aceyalone from the freestyle fellowship and Del the Funky Homosapien had a big effect on us as they showed us how to lift our game so to speak. And who better, really, than them and all the other artists that we have worked with to show us how to develop as a group. Speaking on behalf of the other members of the group the inspirations are pretty wide across the board so I think all those different combinations come together and reflect in the music that we make…

How did Swollen Members come about and could you recap a little on the releases that you've had prior to this new album?

Prevail: Well me and Moka Only had been good friends for a long time and we had been rapping together previously to doing Swollen Members. It all came about really when we met up with Madchild, I ran into him briefly in SF and then again in a house party in Vancouver which is where we're from originally. We basically got on really well and were into the same things musically and it just progressed from there. We started rapping together, myself, Moka Only, and Madchild, which led to the forming of the group. After a while Moka wanted to pursue a couple of solo possibilities so he went of to do his thing, and me and Madchild stayed as Swollen Members and have been releasing albums for about 4 to 5 years now. We did the 1st album Balance where we teamed up with the likes of Del tha Funky Homosapien, Aceyalone, Mix Master Mike and Safir. That was good for us as it gave us the opportunity to work with people that we ourselves respected as artists in their own right. We learnt a lot from them and it helped establish our sound. From there went on to do the album Bad Dreams which was 2 yrs later and saw the return of Moka on the track 'Fuel Injected' alongside the likes of Chal 2na, Planet Asia and of course Evidence, Babu and Rocca from Dilated Peoples. This then led to the Monsters in the Closet album with appearances from Nelly Furtado who was really cool to work with. So now we're on the 4th album, Heavy, which sees the original group reforming with Rob The Viking now on production duty…

As far as the new album is concerned what would you like the listener to take from it, was there any main points or observations that you were trying to get across with it?

Prevail: For us it was sort of a retreat back to the mind state that we were at when we recorded our 1st album, Balance. We basically rented a house in Venice, California, and built a studio in there and just cut ourselves off and focused on making the album. For about 3 or 4 months we would go to the studio every day and just worked through it really until we were happy with the end result. We did not necessarily become complete recluses while making the album but I feel we make our music best when there is no interruption from the outside world, and I think that will come across as well as the feeling of progression not just in the lyrics but in the beats and the whole structure of the tunes. We have learnt a lot about how to be intricate in making the music and not just getting a DJ in to do the cuts and then throwing a chorus in and stuff. We have tried to aim for more depth but still retaining the sound that captured people's attention in the first place…

The artwork for the album cover was drawn by Comic legend Todd Mcfarlane (of Spawn fame), how did that come about?

Prevail: We wanted Todd to do the Bad Dreams cover originally but at the time it was not really available to us financially and we did not have a good way of contacting him at the time so we kind of left it on the back burner. Later on we mentioned it to our manager and he was straight on the phone to Terry Fitzgerald, and he said that Todd had heard our music and was a fan so things just went from there. In the end he ended up directing the video for our track with Nelly Furtado called Breath which was his directorial debut so we just hit it off. He did the album cover for us and there are also things in the pipeline that we have been talking about so we hope to do more work with him.

And looking to the future is there any projects and tours that people should look out for?

Prevail: Well right now we are working on the new album. Its untitled thus far but we have been working with a production team called the Matrix, and I guess we're their first real hip hop project so it has been interesting to mix the underground sound that we have with their way of making beats, so watch out for that. As far as touring is concerned we're doing the whole European thing and we will be playing Glastonbury and hopefully the Brixton Academy. It's been a long time since we've been overseas so we just want to re-establish ourselves world wide again and to show that we haven't forgotten the people world wide that have supported us…

DJ HYPE

words: Francesco Caccamo
photo: Cleveland Aaron

Like an eager student anxiously anticipating the arrival of his teacher, I nervously paced up and down outside a tube station deep in the heart of East London, awaiting the arrival of my lecturer for the day. Today's lecture was going to be history, but not your run of the mill history you can access by going to a library or by enrolling in a course at a university or college. Neither was my lecturer going to be some tweed-jacket-wearing bumbling old codger. I was about to get a junglistic insight into the years fundamental to the emergence of this hyperactive frenzy of sound we've all come to love, from a man who this year is celebrating 15 years in the game. One of the playaz intrinsic to the scene's foundation: he don't need no introduction… "Hype! Hype! Gimme da funk! Gimme da funk!"

As my school bus, or rather Hype's Mercedes, pulls up, I notice a certain four-legged friend named after a U.S. West coast rapper sitting in the front seat. It looked like I'd be riding in the back for this one... "That dog's more famous than some DJs, you know," jokes Hype… "and he's met the real Snoop Dog." A fat tune was blaring on the car's system, so I asked who it was by… "It's off the new Potential Bad Boy EP coming out on Ganja." If the funk-fuelled bomb I heard is anything to go by, it's going to be big… "Potential is someone I've respected for a long time. Last year we started talking about doing a project together. I invited him on board and now he's a signed artist. He's one of the originators, having worked with the Ibiza camp, and pioneered a lot of what you hear today. Everybody has a lot of respect for him, but he's never received the recognition he deserves." Also, watch out for his '1, 2, 3, Go!' on the forthcoming 'Extended Playaz' EP out in March, alongside Friction & Nu Balance's 'Boogyman', Hive's 'Last Call', and 'Imagination' by Hazard.

After a short drive, we arrive at what is to be the lecture theatre for the afternoon: Hype's studio, although there wasn't much of a studio left due to his transition from hardware to software… "I'm slowly clearing everything out. I've given one of my desks to Hazard, another one to Potential, and the rest is going to Pascal's." So why the transition… "Practicality. I haven't got time to sit in a studio all day. At first I only bought the laptop so I could learn programs whilst the studio was being rebuilt, and then I realised there was no point because I could write everything on computer. My last two EPs were done on laptop, and they've done well, so I'm happy."

Eventually the time came for me to get out my pen and paper (my minidisc recorder) and sit down at my desk (Hype's sofa), ready for the opening remarks from Professor Hype… "The problem is that the history isn't clear. You get different sides of the story from talking to different people. That doesn't mean anyone is wrong, there were just lots of things happening back then. What I can do is comment on it from my perspective. Some people may agree, others might not, and that's fair enough." Some of the topics covered by Professor Hype were how he got into music, the 'Rave' scene and the effect ecstasy had on social cohesion, the appearance of the Drum n Bass Jungle phenomenon, the part that he himself played in its foundation and consolidation, and what the Professor's plans are for this year. This will be followed by some reflections on the present situation. Here are my notes from the lecture:

Hype and music:
"I got into music around the age of 13. Me, Shut Up 'n Dance and DJ Daddy, who still MCs on my tunes today, started off in Hackney doing a Reggae sound system together. The whole Reggae sound system thing then evolved to Soul, Reggae and Rare Groove, and our sound also adapted. At our nights, I'd start by cutting up stuff like Peter Piper, RUN DMC and LL Cool J. The next minute our MC would start chatting Ragga, so I'd be cutting up Reggae with two copies of the same track. PJ and Smiley (from Shut Up 'n Dance) used to rap, so I'd cut up breaks for them. We used to have a drum machine going as well. There was no Drum n Bass Jungle back then, but we used to play many of the elements that eventually came together to create it. We were young and had no big people to help us, so we had to do everything off our own backs. Not only would we play all night, but we'd also take the sound to and from the venue and promote the night." Soon, the musical scenario was to start evolving even further…

The 'Rave' scene:
"With the advent of the so-called 'Rave' scene in 1989, I was surprised at how easy things were, compared to dragging your sound around the place. I remember hearing DJs on pirates plugging where they'd be playing that weekend, and there I was, a competition DJ, without any bookings. The most important thing for me was to DJ, so I joined Fantasy FM to test myself. I changed my name from Doctor K to Hype to see how long it would take me to establish myself, and it was almost instant. When I started doing Fantasy FM, I played Hip-Hop records at 45rpm and added breaks to tunes that didn't have them. At the time it was groundbreaking, not that I was thinking that: I was just doing my thing. In the same year, I got the job doing the A & R for Kickin', where I signed The Scientist and co-wrote and produced 'The Exorcist', 'The Bee' and 'Kick Squad', which were all really successful."

At the same time, a new craze was sweeping the land: Ecstasy. Hype saw the changes caused by this new drug first hand…"Where I was brought up, white kids talked with black kids all day long, but at night there was segregation. There'd be the odd black kid in a pub, and the odd white kid, like me, in a Ragga dance. The funny thing was, if I ever brought a white friend to a dance, he'd be trembling because he thought he'd get beaten up or mugged, yet he'd go to the pub every Friday where there was far more violence, and feel perfectly comfortable. When ecstasy first came into the rave scene in the late 80s, it took away the tension that you'd witness in a pub or at Ragga dance. The first rave experience I had where I saw people on ecstasy, I couldn't believe what I was seeing. People were offering me cigarettes and starting conversations. I almost took offence to someone trying to be nice to me. I was brought up at 'Blues Parties' where there'd be 20 mans standing above me looking to be impressed, while in a rave, everybody would be apologising for stepping on your foot and offering you water. At first I was confused because I didn't realise it was the Es, but then going to a club where there were people of different cultures and classes started to appeal to me. If you went clubbing in the E era, '89 to '91, you wouldn't see any trouble. Unfortunately, people then started getting into the money side of things, and the drugs turned bad, and things changed. I'm not trying to endorse drugs, because they ruin lives, but at the time ecstasy played a major part in breaking down social and cultural barriers."

The appearance of the Jungle / D&B phenomenon:
Eventually, the conditions were right for the birth of a new form of music… "Because Drum n Bass Jungle didn't start in one place, it's difficult to pin point where it came from. Back then people played what they wanted, and there was no pigeonholing: it was one big melting pot. It wasn't definable and it didn't have a name like it does now, but I'd say it was a fusion of elements such as Reggae, Hip-Hop, Techno, House and original breakbeats, which resulted in the creation of Drum n Bass Jungle. In my opinion, one of the people who played a major part in shaping the music was Paul Ibiza and his camp (Noise Factory, Kemet Crew, Potential Bad Boy, Brain Killers, etc): they were among the first to speed up to around 170bpm. People like Shut Up 'n Dance were also influential in that they paved the way for the eclectic nature of Drum n Bass Jungle, and they highlighted the fact that you didn't have to be signed to be successful. Then you had people like Reinforced, and later Metalheadz, who pioneered the production side of things: you would buy their records to hear new production techniques. Then there was Bukem and Fabio who represented the mellower side. Everybody played different roles, with progressions happening in different places around the world at different times. Eventually, out of the chaos, evolved what we have now."

Foundation:
Hype also played his part. After his time at Kickin' came a brief foray into the charts in '91 as Isotonic with 'Everywhere I go' for FFRR. Then came a spell working for Suburban Base in '93, for whom he produced 'Trooper', 'Roll The Beats' and 'Shot In The Dark' (which reached 65 in the national charts). However, working with labels soon led him down a different path… "Back when I worked for Kickin' and Suburban Base, it wasn't about setting up your own label, but being signed to someone else's. All I really wanted to do was be a DJ, and get at least a booking a week. I didn't want to do everything myself. It's much easier simply handing over your DAT and getting paid. However, there came a point where I didn't think I was gaining anything from my relationship with labels, so I walked away. That was a learning period for me. I've made a lot of wrong moves in my career, but I've managed to walk away from them. I'm not going to stick around when I think I'm being treated unfairly. That's why nowadays, as a label owner, I've made a conscious decision to treat my artists fairly. Having subsequently lost faith in working with labels, in '94 I decided to start my own label, Ganja."

Hype wasn't planning big things for the label, his intention being to have an outlet for his tracks. However, from the release of the debut track 'Cops', the label was an immediate success, and featured other seminal tracks such as 'You must think first' and Zinc's 'Super Sharp Shooter', culminating in '96 with the 'Still Smokin' album… "The label got successful to the point that I couldn't control it on my own, and that's when I made the decision to drop Ganja and start True Playaz with Pascal and Zinc. Pascal I met in '92 through a guy called Sponge who worked at Wired for Sound. He helped me run Ganja and I helped him run Frontline. Then Zinc, who used to always come into 'De Underground', a local record shop, would bring me tunes to hear. Initially, I didn't like his stuff, but I'd give him hints on how to improve his tracks. Eventually, he came to me with 'Super Sharp Shooter', and the rest is history. That was around the same time I got the RCA deal, and not wanting to sign as 'Hype', I created the Ganja Kru moniker especially so I could bring them in on it". The RCA deal ended after the release of three EPs due to artistic differences and changes of personnel at the label. However, this did not hinder Hype's progress: things went from strength to strength… "Eventually, True Playaz got to the point where it was ahead of schedule. Zinc was making too many tracks to put out on one label so he started Bingo. Pascal already had Frontline, so I decided to bring back Ganja. Having three musical outlets enabled me to bring in other artists. That wasn't originally the plan, but with the new generation of producer coming through, you've got to give them a platform to work from while at the same time maintaining and progressing what's already there. I've always been about bringing forward other artists rather than promoting my own productions. As one camp, if one gains, we all gain."

All for one and one for all. This philosophy of nurturing talent has continued today with bright young spark DJ Hazard… "Back 2 Basics had given me a few things of his to cut and I liked them. Thinking he was signed to them, I didn't show any interest. On speaking to him, he told he wasn't. I told him I liked what he was doing, that it suited the camp and that we would look after him well if he was to join. After we signed him, he got noticed purely off the back of the dubs from his first EP, which was a lot quicker than I expected. Now, having brought through Hazard as well as Zinc, I'm confident that I can make the right choices of who to bring into the camp." As well as veteran Potential Bad Boy, another artist soon to make his debut on Ganja is Magistrate with his remix of Hype's recent hit 'Foundation'… "At the moment I'm working with him in the studio, helping him to get up to a standard where we can release his stuff. It gives me pleasure to see someone being successful knowing that I've played a part in it. As much as I'm helping these younger guys come through, they're helping me as well. They're younger and have a different perception of the scene, and that helps me keep in touch with what's going on. It's also good for me as a DJ, because new artists means fresh music, and that keeps me excited."

The new and improved 2004 roster is looking quite formidable. So what additional study material can we expect from Hype and the camp this year I hear you ask? On the True Playaz front, the above-mentioned 'Extended Playaz' EP (which may become a series… keep 'em peeled) will be preceded by Zinc's 'Ska' remix, and followed by an EP by Pascal, featuring Moving Fusion's re-work of the all-time classic 'P-Funk Era'. This will probably be followed by releases from Hazard and Hype himself. There's also word of a possible True Playaz mix CD due soon, but there's no definite news yet as the camp are still deciding on the format the compilation will take. While we're on the subject of compilations, Hype is set to do a second mix CD for the Fabric Live series, due out later this year. There may also be a compilation mix CD on Ganja, but this depends on whether Hype can find some time away from the studio, or rather his laptop. Vinyl-wise on Ganja, Potential Bad Boy's forthcoming EP will be followed by a 12" from Hazard ('Get The Fuck Up'/'Wonkey Donkey') and a yet untitled 12" from Hype. Finally, if you've heard Hype play out recently, then you may have heard his rip-roaring collaboration with J Majik 'Dubplate Thrilla', which is likely to be released as a joint venture between Infrared and Ganja. You can find news on forthcoming releases from all the labels, as well information on artists, events, and even a facility which allows members to get a @playazmail.com address at www.true–playaz.co.uk.

The present situation:

"Having been here for 15 years and having seen the ups and downs, I'm pretty confident that things are going the right way at the moment. We've got this huge melting pot again where there's scope for everything. You've got people working with singers, you've got live acts, you've got MCs doing their thing; a whole variety of Drum n Bass Jungle related projects. You've also got a huge array of new talent coming through. There's a constant regeneration within the scene, which is important, because longevity is what we're aiming for. At the same time, the people at the top need to keep their heads and keep control of it all. Personally, I'm doing what I've always done, but on a larger scale. I love producing, but DJing is the main thing for me. I play all over the world: France, Japan, the US, Canada, Germany. I also played in Spain last October, and now I'm trying to help the promoters out there get the scene going. Considering the UK's relationship with Spain, it's quite surprising that things haven't gone off there yet. After going out there, you can see people want it, it's just it hasn't been given to them properly."

Then there are the legendary True Playaz nights at Fabric… "That's my night. It's the one I look forward to the most because I play two hours in a perfect environment, where I can showcase myself and play a more personal set. I feel at home there. The nights are very successful. The Christmas bash was huge, and the last night we put saw the club at it's most rammed for over six months." …you can catch Hype and company at Fabric the last Friday of every month, while early on Sunday mornings you can catch him on Kiss 100… "The show recently moved from it's Monday morning slot to 1am till 3am on a Saturday night. And now I'm alternating with Adam F. It's a good platform because not only can you catch it in London and on the net, but also on Digital TV. I pre-record the shows, normally on a Saturday afternoon, but I keep in the clangs (laughs)…we're all human. I try to keep the show as natural as possible, playing a variety of styles." …as with everything the man does, it's all about keeping it real and representing to the fullest.

As quickly as the lecture began, the bell rang and it was over: home time. Although I spent three and a half hours listening to the ins and outs of an era, my thirst for knowledge was still unquenched. I felt as if there was still much more to know, but there just wasn't enough time. What remains to be said is that Hype, despite sometimes being depicted as slightly moody ("that's just the weed […] it's difficult keeping up appearances after a four hour drive […] you try playing three venues in one night"), is an extremely likeable, down to earth and warm character. I was amazed by his altruism, his willingness to share his experiences and knowledge, and his story-telling capacities.

Well, until next time, that's it. I hope you've found the lecture informative. I leave you with a final remark from today's speaker…"In everything I do and have done in these last 15 years, whether it be DJing, producing, through the labels or through my radio show, I've always tried to represent the scene as a whole, offering a mixture of what this music has to give: my vision of it all. These 15 years have been a natural progression, and now it's about taking things at my own pace. I'm not trying to change the world, I'm just trying to keep the world going: and I've done it my way."

words: Guy Brickley

MC TALI

We all know the story by now of how this Kiwi girl went up to MC in Roni Size's ear at a gig in Australia, and ended up moving to England and working with Bristol's finest. This was almost two and a half years ago now, and Tali has established herself as a bona fide artist within the Drum & Bass scene, expanding and developing her sound to the point where she is about to release her debut LP on Full Cycle. There has been plenty of hype surrounding the album, and with hits like "High Hopes" and "Blazin" causing havoc on the underground circuit, people may well be asking themselves if Tali could be the biggest thing in DnB since Reprazent?

Tali's first 12" on Full Cycle "Lyric On My Lip" turned heads all across the board, soaked in Roni Size's trademark sound, but with a vocalist that brought something fresh and original to the table. Since then, Tali's popularity has snowballed as she became a fundamental part of the Full Cycle camp, and could be found MCing all across the land, stamping her mark on the scene's consciousness.

Now a permanent resident in Bristol, Tali has settled into the lifestyle and has become a regular Bristolian: "I love it! It's home now. When I'm here, I definitely do miss friends and family, but the last two times I've been away to Australia and NZ I really missed the UK. I was in Jamaica last week with my boyfriend and I said to him "I can't wait to get back to Bristol". England really feels like home for me now, and I've settled into so many of the traditions and the simple ways of life, that when I go home to NZ everything feels so bright and big and colourful. You get things done a lot easier in NZ… like the postal system is much quicker, but I'm used to it here now, you know? I think I'll be here for a lot longer…"

From her childhood in New Zealand to being part of the UK drum & bass scene would seem like quite a monumental step for anyone, but Tali does not seemed overwhelmed by what has happened to her. You get the feeling that she is definitely a girl who gets what she wants, and has no doubts in her mind when she has made her decision: "I've had lots of surprises and lots of positive things happen, that I would never have expected, but in saying that there have been loads of things happen that I just knew would happen. The thing is, that even before I met Roni and the crew I knew I was going to meet them. Before I came to England and started working in the drum & bass scene, I knew that was what I was going to do. I set myself a lot of goals, and have just managed to fulfil them through sheer hard work and I guess talent helps, and luck and optimism can go a long way."

Tali first encountered drum & bass when she was at college in New Zealand, going to all-genre raves with her friends: "When I got into DnB in New Zealand around '96/'97 it was really downplayed. It was always the last genre to be played at all-genre raves. I stumbled over it by accident really. I was with some friends at one of these all-genre raves. I used to really enjoy the raving side of things, but I didn't like the music so much and wasn't feeling the house and trance, but I loved all the people being really happy together in one place." Not being into energy-enhancing substances, Tali usually found herself going home before the end of the night, and it wasn't until she stayed late one night that she heard the sound that changed her life: "Drum & bass came on at four in the morning and this DJ called Silencer absolutely ripped it! He dropped Krust's remix of 'Maintain' and that's when my life changed forever. It really was a case of 'Last night a DJ saved my life', as cheesy as it sounds."

From this point onwards, Tali became a d n b junkie, reading every magazine from cover to cover and listening to tapes of the One in the Jungle shows. Her boyfriend at the time started a radio show, which was broadcast to thousands of listeners, and was the only one of its kind in the South Island of NZ. Tali began hosting the show and continued to live and breathe the music, but it was their decision to start a promotions company that really got the ball rolling: "We started to get a bit frustrated with the fact that there was only one promotions company in NZ, and a lot of the artists they brought over was just the same artists and the same music. We were like, 'Where's the funk man? Where are the Bryan Gee's and the Roni's and Shy FX's?' So we set up our own promotions company, and I did a lot of the PA work, organising the visas and writing out the blurbs for the flyers and shit like that."

When they started to bring MCs over to their raves, Tali began to realise that this was what she wanted to do: "I always loved how they sounded on the tapes, but to see them live just added a whole new element, especially because I'd always been into hip-hop, rhyming and writing raps and poems. I told my boyfriend that I was interested in it and he was like: 'If you're really serious about doing this, we should think about it because you'll be one of a kind.' So we just practised up in my front room, took it out to a few local raves and then when Bailey came over, Flux fell ill and couldn't come out so I stepped in and did his job. It was amazing!"

From there it all just snowballed, Tali moved up to Australia and worked with some promotions crews up there and that's where she met Roni Size, while he was out there on tour and the rest is history.

Tali is primarily known on the MC circuit for her unique approach to mic handling, flowing effortlessly from razor-sharp rhymes into sweet song and back again. Her main piece of advice to anyone out there considering becoming an MC, is to be original: "It's ok to be influenced by people, and to take on other people's styles, but it's really important to find your own personality, so that when you're up there and you're doing your thing people are hearing something inspirational… something that's unique."

The release of the album will expose Tali in several new lights, highlighting her talents as a songwriter for those who might only have seen her as an MC. 'Lyric On My Lip' is an LP steeped in personal experience, whether it's the excitement and optimism of tracks like 'High Hopes' or 'Lyric', or the subtle melancholy of 'Grey Days', Tali wears her heart on her sleeve: "When it comes to song writing I think I'm quite an atmospheric writer. I like to write on the way that things are making me feel, the weather… your environment, rather than just your emotions. Your emotions reflect how you feel, and the way people treat you, but the environment you are in, especially if you've come from somewhere like New Zealand or Australia to somewhere like England. It's quite different and it can be quite a culture shock, so to write about that is really interesting because that's a unique perspective."

The album is mainly produced by Roni with the exception of a couple of Krust and Die productions, and stretches across genres without anything seeming out of place: "I'm really proud of the album as a whole. The whole vision was that we wanted an album that reflected me and my personality, and where I was from, but also embodied the producer's personality. I'd be doing like two tunes at once with Die and maybe two tunes with Roni, so I'd have a lot of tunes on the go. I'd go to round to Clipz's house and next thing you know we're making a tune together, so at the end of the day I did about twenty five tunes. Then it was just a case of the five of us sitting down and saying what our favourites were, how we felt they worked and choosing the final tunes."

Not one to waste any time, Tali is already talking about her next LP and has just bought some studio equipment that she intends to get to grips with as soon as possible: "I'm waiting for D-Product to come round and give me a couple of lessons a week. By next year I want to have a real grasp of Logic, because when I want to work, they aren't always available and when they want me to work I'm not always around. So it will be nice when they're busy I can sit down in the studio and maybe meet them 50/50 on production duties, or even come up with a little riff that I can take round to their house and say 'this is an idea that I've come up with'. If I'm not being creative, I just get depressed."

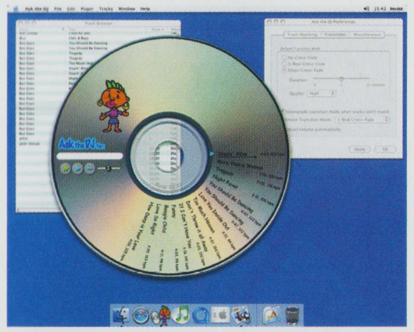
Coinciding with the launch of Tali's LP she will be touring the UK with a full live band kicking off at London's prestigious Jazz Café on March 3rd. Audiences will also be treated to Roni Size's live outfit as he showcases some forthcoming material from his forthcoming V Recordings album. I asked Tali how working in a band situation compares to MCing with a DJ: "When you work with a band you've got loads of people to bounce off, and the focus and responsibility is not all on you. Its so much more of an edgy, raw feeling… everybody's feeding off each other, looking at each other and you've got the audience there. When it's just you MCing, it's really fun because you're a lot freer and you're not stuck to what the lyrics are. You can be a lot more creative and fuck up without making the drummer go out of time or freaking out your backing singers. So they both have their positive sides." Tali is quick to assert her love for the mic and two turntables scenario, and will definitely continue to MC when the tour comes to an end.

Already a fixture around the UK and Europe and Australasia, Tali has also been making a gradual impact in the US whilst on tour. "Its amazing going to America because I've got a little following now. When I first got there people were like "Who the fuck is this chick?" and then the second time I went they were OK. The third time I went, there were people there that were there to see me, which was amazing! It just made me feel like I'd really hit the nail on the head, to go to Los Angeles and have people queuing up to hear me."

But at the end of the day Tali is happy to return to Bristol, which has become her honorary hometown, and the creative centre for her and her prolific friends. It seems that her success is running nicely alongside her boyfriend's (DJ Clipz) in what should prove to be a big year for both of them. Plans for the future? "I'm just taking each day as it comes. I like to think about the future and set goals, but at the moment I'm just really happy watching things snowball." And long may they continue to do so.

"Lyric On My Lip" will be released later this month along with a re-release of the title track with a brand new mix from someone very special. If you want to catch Tali live she will be touring throughout March - Jazz Café on 3rd March, Islington Academy on the 13th, 14th Brighton Concorde, 16th Sheffield Uni, 17th Nottingham Rock City, 18th Leeds Event Horizon, 20th Newcastle Uni, 21st Glasgow QMU, 22nd Cardiff, 24th Bristol Academy, 25th Cambridge and 26th Manchester Academy.

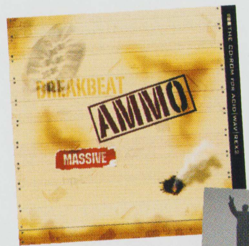
Compiled by Dave Fobia

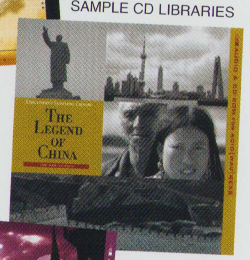


ASK THE DJ

KORG MICROKONTROL

STANTON SA-12. DJ CRAZE SIGNATURE MIXER





DISCOVER SOUND. SAMPLE CD LIBRARIES

ALLEN & HEATH XONE V6 MIXER

Once again we take a one-way ticket to Geeksville and the wonderful world of Technology. This issue we touch base with Allen & Heath and see for ourselves why the V6 is considered the best mixer in the world, and long-time heroes Korg let us road test the new MicroKontrol. There's some software saviours from Intakt, the new 3 in 1 sampling machine from Native Instruments, and one for the mums and dads in the shape of Ask The DJ, a fun new app that mixes your tunes for you! Also DJ Craze and Stanton team-up to build a world-class scratch mixer, and Discovery Sound bring us more Sample CD's than Michael Jackson's had court appearances! Let the tech-spec commence.

ASK THE DJ. Beat-Matching Application

The Wild Bits have just released 'Ask the DJ' v1.5. Ok, so Tractor gives you the tools to mix your own tracks, but this mixes for ya!! It often produces a clanger due to the fact that it doesn't like matching Drum & Bass grooves (it reads them all in half BPM?), but it's great to have on in the background, especially if it's loaded with house grooves. Ask The DJ is shareware and registration costs $29, and as far as I'm aware it's only on Mac OS X at the moment? So go get one! Check www.wild-bits.com for a demo an' ting.

Stanton SA-12. DJ Craze signature mixer

Stanton have come with a new mixer for all turntable terrorists, and they've teamed up with 4000 times World DJ champ Craze to design the ultimate Battle weapon. Here's a brief spec rundown. 2 line, 2 phono, and 1 mic/line (switchable) inputs, 3-band EQ, Gain, and slider-style Pan control per channel, cross-fader and program faders, reverse switches & curve adjustments, two headphone inputs (1/4" and 1/8" minijack) w/ headphone mute, TRS balanced master output w/ output trim control, and mono-stereo switch.

The SA-12, has a number of scratch friendly features as you would expect, as well as some neat extras, the most effective being the soft/quiet start feature, so when you turn the mixer on there are no pops that can blast the woofers out ya system! It also incorporates a removable effect's module, which includes pitch shifter, flanger, and delay all with Parameter and mix controls, with additional modules becoming available in the future. These modules can then be assigned to any channel, the microphone, or the main mix. Expect to find OS2 optical phono/line switches here also, which are so free flowing there's no click when switching between the 2, and they come with a new lock feature.

The 3-position cue rocks aswell. In pre cue, you can cue the normal way, in master cue, you can hear what the crowd is hearing, and lastly in post cue, you can scratch in your headphones using the cross-fader with the other record playing, and the crowd wont be able to hear it! It looks good, smells good, and tastes good, plus Penny & Giles (of Allen & Heath fame), have been drafted in to supply some custom made faders with curve adjustment, so it must be good! Retailing for around £599 (a bit expensive?), the SA-12 Craze signature mixer is a must for all scratch masters! Visit stanton-magnetics.com for some Craz-e shit!

Discovery Sound. Sample CD Libraries

Making your own music these days seems as standard as your mum washing the skids out ya pants, so we search the globe for a top quality sound-base of samples as the music we all know and love as Drum & Bass evolves and mutates into a more twisted art-form. Discovery Sound, have blessed us all the way from Japan with a tidy and varied selection of professional samples to shift through. First up is the Breakbeat Ammo Massive CD, which has a total of 223 files on board in Acid, Wav and Rex2 formats. Split into 2 sub-folders, the first is for Drum & Bass and the second for Hip Hop.

In the first you can expect to find 42 Drum loops, from Liquid to Amens, Tech Itch through to Old Skool, and you would happily associate any part of these awesome breaks with one of your own tracks. Also in this section are Bass loops, Bass drum loops, strings, brass, pads, guitars, fx loops, sine waves, and vocals totalling 55 files and ALL usable, this is jammed with a myriad of parts to keep your sampler well fuelled! The Hip Hop section is just as useful, nicely locked at 85, 90, and 100 BPM, the sounds are much in the same style as the D&B samples but carry a few extra instruments such as harps, sax, organs, and flutes. Breakbeat Ammo retails for around £25, what a bargain.

Next up is a string of traditional global Sample CD's. The Legend of China £35, Amazing Thailand £55, and Bom Dia Brazil £35, are all authentic sounds of their respective homelands. Thailand and China come as double CD's with CD1 packaged as the usual Rex, Acid and Wav files, while CD2 brings us the 'audio-only' format, and lastly the single Brazilian disc which is minus the 'audio-only' section.

Bom Dia Brazil is packed with 360 files split into percussion, grooves, cavacal, and capoeira sections, and you can see why the Brazilians are considered masters of percussion. This CD is a real treat for the contributors to the influx of Brazilian tinged D&B of late. The China and Thailand sets are stunning! Both split into percussion, stringed and wind instruments, voices, and ambient noises, and then split again into loops, shots, and audio only formats, with bonus effects for sampling and even some movies! The 2 sets boast; 387 files (China) + 335 files (Thailand) Totalling 722 sampling files and contain possibly the most authentic sounds I have ever heard, and BOY some of those instruments are just made for frantic percussive workouts with a difference.

Last but not least is the 'Sound Spiral' CD, and the 'Voice Percussion' CD, available for £25 and £15 respectively. Sound Spiral is a library of every day sound effects, such as Nature, Traffic, Animals, War, and Industry. All appearing here as loops only, their astounding quality and versatility are well on par with the old BBC effects vinyl. If you don't have any real-life sound effects libraries, then this should happily quench your thirst. The Voice Percussion CD is one of my favourites, as it's so fresh sounding, a sort of Killa Kella for straight people? Inside are 161 Rex and Wav files rooted in various BPM's, with sounds encompassing the lungs, arteries, and vocal chords, so crystal-sounding you won't believe! And more fun to chop up than someone who owes you money!

Every one of the above-mentioned CD's are of outstanding quality and originality, and the very nicely designed packaging is extremely informative for tracing where you are at with the track-listings, as the attention to detail on the instrument parts is superb and could be a little confusing otherwise. Ideal for injecting fresh sounds into D&B production, or any musical genre come to think of it! The D.S libraries are an absolute must for any serious producer. For more info, check discoverysound.com

NATIVE INSTRUMENTS presents INTAKT

Innovative as ever, Native Instruments come with a plush new toy. INTAKT is a state-of-the-art sampler specifically designed for total manipulation of all things loop based, and has a built in Time-stretcher and beat- slicer! It comes tooled up for use on PC or Mac OSX and is nicely packaged with 2 CD's and an in depth user manual, with CD1 being the installation disc and CD2 providing a shit-load of samples (1.3 Gigabyte), sounds and loops for all musical genres.

Once installed, we are greeted by a familiar looking blue interface with a niche of its own, the 3 main functions of Intakt are not separate application windows, but just a single window that is switchable between the 3 functions without disrupting you're creative flow. Here's a brief outline of the 3 layers in the Intakt Scooby Snack! First up the Beat machine, which uses an advanced peak-detection algorhythm to divide the imported audio into individual hits (As Re-Cycle would). Each hit can have individual settings for pitch, playback direction, pitch envelope, amp envelope, distortion, delay, and more, plus a MIDI file can be easily exported so that groove, accent, and feel can be manipulated in any host sequencer and it can directly open REX files, which already contain marker information.

Next up, The Time Machine, which does exactly what it says on the tin, it time-stretches or compresses the sound in real-time, so with the greatest of ease you can have 'The Birdy Song' running at 175BPM with an amen to match! (Don't get any ideas!) Then there's the Sampler mode, which plays back the source sound like any standard sampler, by linking pitch with time. INTAKT uses some bad-ass interpolation to ensure the highest sound quality even under the weight of extreme pitch shifts, a nifty little sampler indeed.

All 3 of these features are fully compatable with the array of effects and gadgets that Intakt has on board, plus it also imports WAV, AIFF, REX1 and REX2 files, Gigasampler, AKAI™, HAlion™, EXS™, BATTERY, and KONTAKT instruments. And I have to add, the versatility of Intakt makes it a useful tool for any live performances you need to orchestrate. Available for around the £125 mark, Intakt ran super smooth on a G4, making it worth every penny! Well, I don't wanna spoil it for ya, grab yourself a free demo at nativeinstruments.de.

Korg MicroKontrol.
Portable MIDI keyboard controller

Hot on the trail of the 'Portable Artist' phenomenon, Korg come with a new Midi controller, The MicroKontrol. Securely packaged, and laden with Mac and Windows software, Korg's vintage style design can be found here yet again, but this time around there's a touch of N.A.S.A, with it's ever changing spectrum of L.E.D's and text programmable displays.

It includes a three-octave, 37 note mini keyboard (with Korg's trademark 'thin keys'), that provides Octave Shift and Transpose functions which allow it to cover the full range of C-1 through G9, eight encoders, eight sliders, and sixteen trigger pads that you can use to control your choice of soft synths, Digital Audio Workstation, or other devices such as external MIDI sound modules. The eight encoders and sliders can be assigned to transmit any MIDI control change for volume, panning, or anything else. Operating a controller will transmit the MIDI message assigned to it. Each encoder and slider also has a text programmable LCD (sub display) that indicates the parameter and the transmitted value, so now we can name our chosen parameters with a quirky pet name, while the sixteen trigger pads can be used to trigger notes with full velocity transmission, or assigned to transmit MIDI control changes to operate the transport of your recording software or act as any type of switch, these settings have been named 'scenes' and can be saved and dumped to the provided librarian software, with a maximum of 12 scenes available, and Korg have added a number of layout templates that fit over the said 16 trigger pads, which can be personalized with the stickers provided.

Another hot feature of the Kontrol is the joystick, which allows the user to obtain a control level of parameters previously only available through hardware devices.

The Kontrol runs on USB or AC power, weighs less than Kate Moss, and fits in the smallest of places no problem (Funny my good lady said that last night?), making it a true companion to the traveling beat merchant. As per usual, Korg bring us quality sliders and faders and extreme functionality and robustness. If I didn't have an Oxygen 8 already I would purchase one right now! In fact, I might get one anyway! Bring it on at korg.co.uk.

Allen & Heath Xone V6 Mixer

With Cross-fader and Isolator unit add-ons. "Our mission for Xone:V6 was simply to build the highest quality club mixer ever". With a marketing statement like that you gotta be serious! Enter into the gladiator's arena, the Xone V6. It arrived at ATM in a number of separate parcels, each packaged as if it contained the crown jewels, and deservedly so, this is a serious piece of kit! It has looks that would make technical designers everywhere soil their overalls, and once the mass array of quality leads are connected, sounds incomparable to any other mixer on the face of the planet!

The V6 boasts 6 dual-stereo channels CH1-4 are RIAA / Line, CH5-6 are Line / Line, and no op-amps are used, so sonic-purity is ensured on every channel, also valve (or tube) amps are used to mellow harsh digital sources, plus instead of the normal slide faders for each channel, the V6 has rotary dials bolted onto the face panel, with each input mounted on a separate circuit board, and the front panel is machined from a 6mm thick block of aluminium, these details alone show you the level of intricacy achieved by the engineers in designing this product, especially when precision Penny & Giles conductive plastic rotary controls are provided also. There's a high quality mic input, with a metal shrouded balanced XLR connector on the rear panel, while a level control and 2 band EQ (120Hz / 2.5kHz) can be found on the front panel. For the main EQ, there's a large rotary control for high pass filter provided on each channel, which sweeps from 30Hz to 600Hz, and the filter can be switched out using the hi-pass toggle switch. Onto the headphone section, and monitoring incorporates a 'mix/cue' preview control, headphone level, and bass-cut / HF-lift tone control.

Another talent the V6 has is to automatically recognize which A.C voltage you are plugged into, and switch the mixer to match, hardly surprising really, the power pack for this thing resembles the National Grid!

What more, could uncle Allen give us? Well, to cater for all and sundry a cross-fader unit has now become available. Retailing for around £1004, the fader is a 1U rack module, allowing the user to select any input to either side of the fader. Utilizing a Penny & Giles fader and high performance voltage controlled attenuators, the module interfaces with the V6 via channel insert points, then switched between mix and scratch type curves. This really does blend smoother than an Ainsley Harriot cake mix!

Also available now is the EQ Isolator, which also sells for around £1004, and is a dual 3 band stereo isolator to provide variable attenuation of Low, Mid and High frequencies. The module, a 1U rack unit with 6 stereo inputs/outputs, also connects to the V6 via channel insert points using RCA's. The unit has been designed to complement the sonic performance of the V6 and allows any two channels to be assigned to the filters simultaneously. The unit shares the V6 power supply and is connected via a link lead. Its basically a turbo charged, bird pulling older cousin of the old-skool kill switch units, and is superb.

Well, that's the low down on the V6 family tree, this mixer is in a world of its own, with top names such as Richie Hawtin and John Digweed blowing it's trumpet, as well as top D&B club Fabric having one installed, it speaks for itself. If you have a spare £5769.53, BUY ONE!

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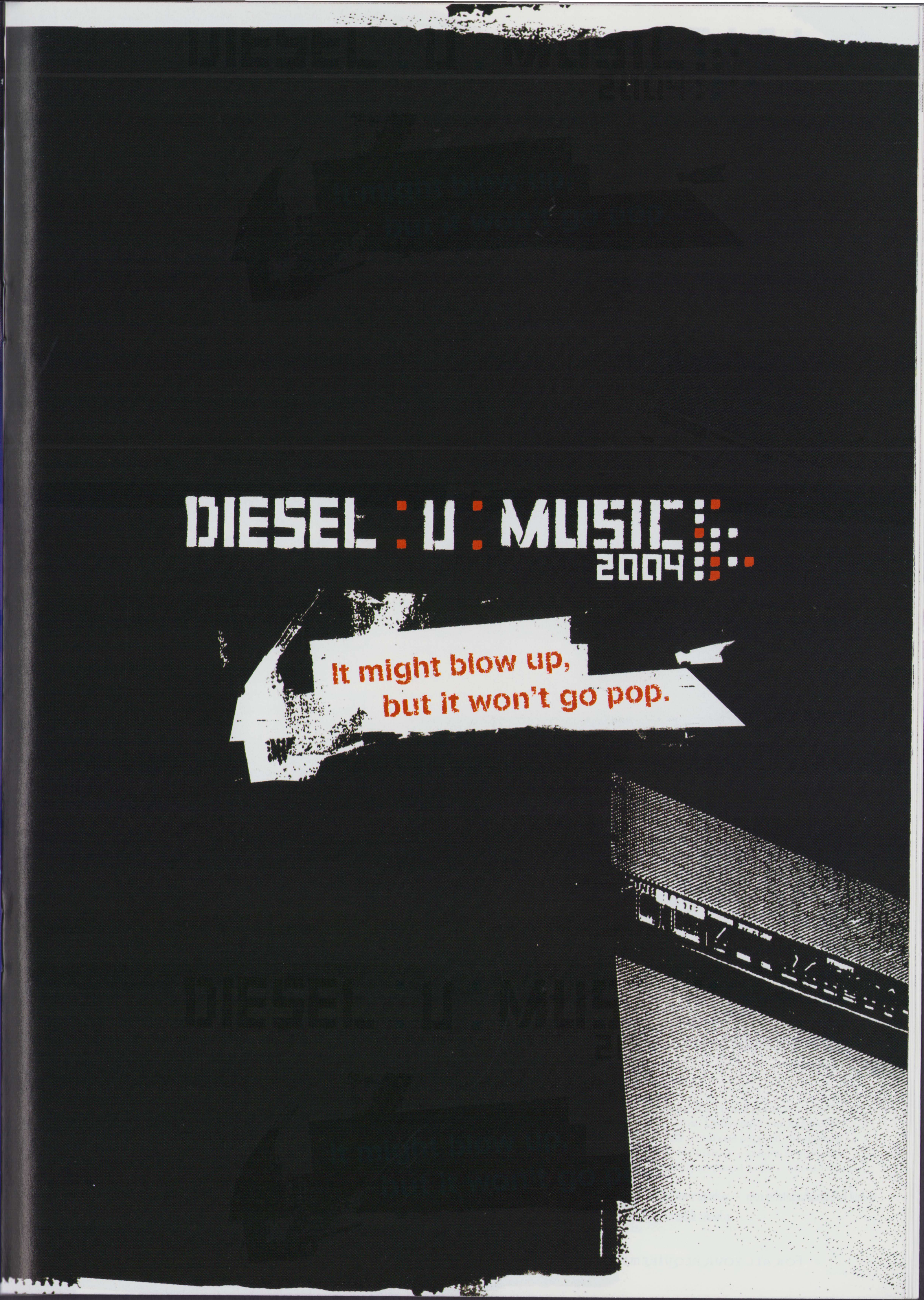

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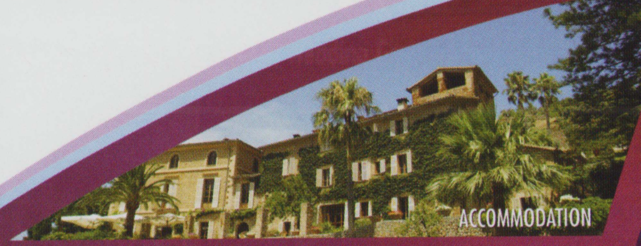

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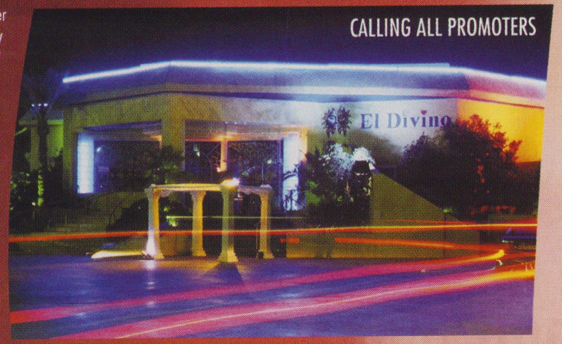

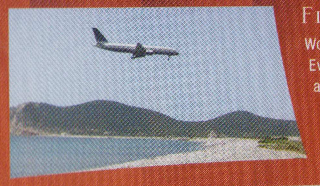

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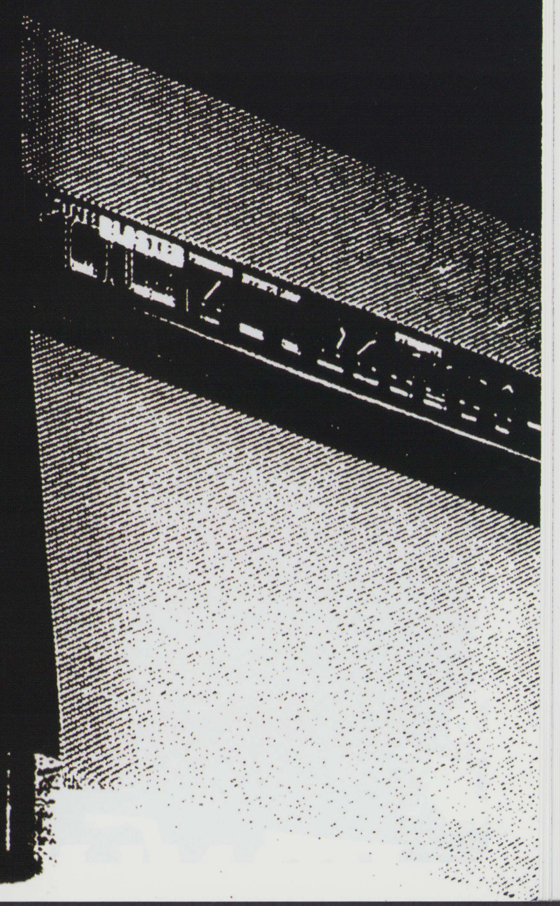

words: **Ahmed Reset**
photo: **Jamie Simonds**

MC FEARLESS

Without question the name MC Fearless is as instantly recognizable as the classic "Boom, Boom" lyrics that tear through the system as soon as he's passed the mic. As one of the scene's true veterans, Fearless has been chatting to packed floors across the country since way back in the early nineties, working for all the major then-Jungle promoters and managing to continue his popularity into the latter D&B years. Despite the lucrative and successful MC career though, Fearless has not sat on his laurels and has gone on to build up an international status, start a label and even perform DJ duties at some of the biggest D&B events around the world.

First breaking onto the scene with a then little known act The Brainkillaz, Fearless went on to hook up with DJ Kenny Ken and began touring the country soon becoming a household name gracing more One Nation and Desire type flyers than you could shake a stick at, and in the process becoming one of the scene's best loved MCs. Shortly after the millennium a foray into record pressing and distribution led to the creation of Hustlin' Beats, a label co-owned by Fearless and his partner Phil from across the pond over in Canada. In an effort to make sure the label was getting the correct exposure MC Fearless became DJ Fearless playing several shows across the country and overseas rinsing out dancefloors along with some of the industries most experienced DJs.

Since getting out of a jail sentence for his young and reckless behavior, Fearless has gone on to earn a true respect from DJs, promoters and more importantly the ravers themselves, finally acquiring one of those much sought after No 1 trophies from this years Accelerated Culture awards. ATM chats to MC Fearless.

So you started out with an outfit called the 'Brainkillaz' who were they and how did you hook up?
"Brainkillaz was like a Ratpack sort of thing, it was Apache, DJ Unknown and me. Apache was a real good family friend. Shortly after I'd come out of jail I was just in my living room chatting to myself over an Acid house tape and Apache come into the room and was just standing there, he listened to me for a few minutes without my noticing him, and was just like… 'Yeah, you need to come down to the studio' so I did a few jingles for them and the response was wicked with people ringing up asking who this new MC was. From that I went on to play at Innocence down in Woolwich and then went on to do the rest of the London circuit and got to know the other MCs in the scene"

What's happening with Hustlin Beats at the moment?
"The label has been put on hold for the last five or six months, but I spoke to my partner yesterday and he's Aiming me over some tunes for the next batch of releases and coming over in May so we can sort out the distribution and come up with some sort of game plan. We have at least two CDs though, full of beats and ready to go out so it's just a matter of sorting out those last minute business sort of things."

Did you specifically decide you wanted the label run internationally or was it just coincidence?
"It was just one of them things really but it works out well. With Phil my partner being in Canada and me being over here it means we can press up things over there and distribute from there and I can do the same over here. That way the tunes get distributed evenly instead of only a handful of copies making it over and ending up with some shop owner just mailing them out to all his friends, this way we can make sure everyone gets a chance to get hold of the vinyl's. It's different with record shops over there. It's different for the style of tunes over there as well… anything old skool they'll take hands down it's all good with the new stuff but give them the old skool and it's off."

Are there any artists you've come across that you feel are going to have a big impact on the scene in the foreseeable future, through the label or otherwise?
There's some great MC's over there like Tragedy, El Natural, MC P. There's nuff MCs' that are worth just going out listening to. There's a few from the UK but there are a lot of good MCs coming up from over the water. It's bringing in a different style like a slower more Hip Hop kind of style. A lot of foreigners think we talk too fast anyway so with the double time chatting it's like they're completely lost. Regarding producers we're still sorting out what we're releasing but we have a lot of new names coming.

You've had a lot of success overseas how do you feel the international influence has affected the UK and the scene in general?
"It's a good thing, people are travelling all over the place now and there are more ravers than ever before representing for their own corner of the globe. It means there are new styles always coming through. Different places have different vibes, Canada is really good at the moment the people are just lapping it up. Germany is always good as well."

Even though you've had a very successful career as a D&B MC you've still branched out into a lot of other areas, what is your ultimate goal as an artist?
Mainly just to be successful and keep the label going from strength to strength. I've always been a versatile guy. I originally came from the Rare Groove and Rap side of things from way back in 88' 89' and I didn't even know what a D&B MC was, but there were certain tunes I was feeling and I could get into the whole speed talking thing. I never set out to be specifically a jungle MC but that was the road that was laid out in front of me so I took it.

Do you have any new Hip Hop projects in the pipeline?
"That's forthcoming. I've been writing Hip Hop lyrics for a while and chatting them over D&B. Every now and again you want to do something different in the studio and I've always been into my Hip Hop. There's nothing really confirmed as of yet but that shit is definitely coming."

How do you feel the scene has progressed over the past years from an MC's standpoint?
"The scene has changed a lot from the viewpoint of an MC. In the beginning the focus was all on the DJs and they weren't seeing it from our viewpoint at all. We are out there bigging them up every five minutes and then they go and turn the mic down or unplug it when they felt like it. But now we've got the last laugh because MCs are having their time now and promoters are booking raves with big MC line ups and doing just as well as the promoters with the big DJ line ups. Some of these DJ's are screwing now as MCs are getting paid just as much as them… more in some cases."

Do you feel there have been any significant changes in the scene since the millennium?
"I do think things have got a lot better production wise, plus more people are bringing new styles. Everyone's got their computer nowadays and can bang out the beats at home in whatever style they like. Personally I think things are getting more musical again nowadays as people finally get over the whole darkside over the whole 'pushing the technology' thing and are getting more into the dancing vibe of things again and making more party tunes"

Have you tried any event promotions?
"We've promoted a few events, mainly in Canada as opposed to many over here. I did a thing with Pure Science last year and I'm doing a birthday thing in a few weeks. Plus we've got the O.S.V thing (Old Skool Veterans) that we started last year and it's basically a proper old skool night for the proper heads. A lot of promoters say they're doing an old skool night and then I start hearing 'Bodyrock' and stuff. That may be old skool for some of these new younger ravers, but not to me or most of the older heads so we decided to do something about it. It's basically me Devious D, Funky Flirt, DJ Chase, MC Shockin and Jinx. We've brought this thing in for the ravers that want to still go out but can't handle all the kids and the over excitement nowadays and just want some proper old skool vibes and good times."

Are there any more plans for 'The Professionals' with you Skiba, Det and Shabba?
F: "There isn't anything due for a while due to all of our schedules being so hectic all the time. Skiba's got his Platinum Performers thing and Det's promoting his own night now entitle 'Night of the MCs', Shabba's always flavour of the month and off all over the place and I've got the label and so much MC work. It's difficult to get together but we'll figure something out. There will be more from The Professionals, believe me!

Ever the professional and ready to bring the energy to any event he performs at, MC Fearless has shown a true dedication to the D&B scene in a way only he can, with a seemingly never ending supply of hyper-energy and the cheeky grin it's 100mph all the way to the top. Continuing to storm stages with the same enthusiasm as held during the early 'Brainkillaz' days Fearless has made himself a permanent fixture in the D&B scene and isn't planning to give it up anytime soon. With a new catalogue of Hustlin' Beatz currently being mulled over and an upcoming series of events starting in London things are full on as always. And with this weekend being a typical a "Bristol, Birmingham, Nottingham and then Canada again" kind of weekend you can rest assured that you'll be able to catch Fearless somewhere soon somewhere near you. Main room, as always.

MARKY & XRS

words: Jo Sharff

"Sex!" They both say in unison; "I like sex". Unexpected words uttered from the spirited Brazilian duo, Marky and XRS who are in town promoting their new collaborative album "In Rotation". They are possibly quite taken aback from being asked how they like to relax because XRS retorts, "its all LK LK LK and how we feel about Gilberto Gil being in politics blah blah blah". We decide to go down a different route and I discover that there's more to these two than meets the eye.

Sprawled out in Marky's hotel room, eating chocolates and looking at new clothes it feels more like a teenage girl's bedroom, but that's what so nice about these two – they make it a chilled atmosphere and you feel at home, so I am confident about delving further into their lives. "He likes it more than me" says XRS, referring to their sexual exploits, "I'm a bit of a maniac actually" replies Marky. Hmmmm, ok then! So, where to now?! They go on to talk about what else they like to do; playing old Atari computer games, watching cartoons! ("Tijuana Frogs" is actually named after their favourite cartoon in Brazil), going out, drinking and seeing friends. XRS continues, "I like making friends and seeing other people's point of view. I like to know people deeply. It's a great experience to see other people's problems because they bring help to me as well." There is a lot of substance to this man and it seems that both these artists rely a lot on other people's opinions, particularly regarding their music.

XRS goes on to talk about getting feedback from people when he talks about DJing. In recent times he has certainly been known for being somewhat in the background when DJing is concerned but it was Marky that convinced him otherwise. The similarities between them and close friends Marcus Intalex and ST Files have not gone unnoticed, one as a recognized and extrovert DJ and the other a reserved and hidden producer. When talking about himself and Marky being a "Brazilian MIST", XRS is aware of the comparisons made between himself and Lee; "Most people compare me to Lee because I'm more quiet and in the background, but not now as I'm playing more." He speaks with compassion when talking about his compadre; "Marky has been very positive to me, getting in touch with people, talking to them and letting them know that I exist." Marky is equally feeling towards his partner when he joins in, "I don't think its right when we make a tune and people think that it is just a "Marky track". I don't feel comfortable because he works with me and people need to know him, as he is a great producer. I try and show him to people".

It is quite obvious that these two utterly compliment each other as they both turned their attention to the other's love of DJing and producing, respectively. Marky's number one passion was always DJing ever since he was he was a child but he would never go down to the studio: "I thought it was really shit and boring and couldn't listen to tunes over and over again but because of XRS telling me to come down, I like it now". The same now goes for XRS who was more of a studio addict, "I wasn't DJing because I was lazy and didn't have the patience. But now I'm enjoying it, mainly because it's a good reference to see what you're doing – it is hard just making stuff in the studio and playing tunes for yourself – it doesn't help because you need feedback. When you DJ you get reactions from people."

This strong affiliation between the two has meant that their debut album reeks of style, exuding elements from both their influences: jazz, house, techno, samba and soul. Whereas Marky has brought his jazz influences to the album, such as Ella Fitzgerald and Sarah Vaughn, XRS has brought components from house artists such as Naked Music. There are certainly traces of XRS's solo 1999 album "Sarau" in the new project, which relied notably on house and techno rhythms. "I brought some of my influences from "Sarau" and I'm happy that Marky likes the same things as me. He was really good for me because he brought a lot of records that I liked, the kind of things I never knew I liked" confesses XRS "and I did the same for him."

Their winning combination makes for an album that is an introspective celebration of their culture, influences and love of music. 'In Rotation' has the signature samba feel that has propelled these two to the top of their game over the last two years. However, look a little deeper and you'll be pleasantly surprised by the subtle strings, jazz licks and a rich welcome of percussions. The funky melodies and uplifting vocals from Uncut's Jenna G, Vikter Duplaix and Cleveland Watkiss enriches the debut long player and should entice listeners beyond the dancefloor. There are several instrumental tracks that boast the dexterity of Marky and XRS. "Terapia" is a slow tune with a surprising techno feel to it and "Tijuana Frogs" is a well fitting deep house number. With nonchalant guitar strings throughout, this album seems to be a stark contrast to the kinds of sets Marky has been playing recently in the UK, that are hard and dirty, but clearly his absolute love of soul and jazz filter through here.

The album is coming out on Innerground, a label that XRS actually set up 9 years ago in 1995 but has lay dormant for several years. Back then drum n bass was merely a notion in Brazil, nothing to the supremacy it holds now.

Innerground was a dream that this extremely talented engineer and producer began to fulfil; however as XRS sadly confesses, "Things were happening that meant that it was not the right time and it was a trauma for me to finish the label". Fast forward to 2004 and the picture is quite different. In a country where drum n bass is firmly rooted as a celebrated musical genre, it was clearly the right time to resurrect the label. It wasn't an immediate decision though. The pair were actually toying with the idea of a new label. "We didn't have a name for the label, it was going to be called something else. We thought about "Lime And Sugar" but all the names we thought of were just so cheesy!" XRS muses, "Marky came up with the idea, you know, to bring back Innerground and he was so convinced that it would work this time."

It seems that these two are pretty much open to anything, practically and musically as XRS explains: "anything that is musical, well constructed and well mixed we like. We're not stuck in a music rut, we like to listen to hard stuff and rock 'n' roll. My rock influences are quite hard actually. I listen to Ministry, Pantera and Nine Inch Nails. My palate has grown a lot with time and there's more stuff to choose from these days."

The ever-changing scene is making it increasingly difficult to compete, as the standards are constantly being challenged with the abundance of new artists popping up from every flourishing orifice, making their mark on the dons of drum n bass. With that in mind, more people are attempting to "do it live". London Elektricity have put in the work, made their mark but have no intentions of slowing down. The Jungle Drummer has astounded audiences everywhere with his utter tenacity at drumming to 200bpm.

Marky and XRS are extremely keen to defy the stereotypical "live" DJ set: "Our manager said that we should do a "pocket" show with DJ's and a computer but that's boring and I think its cheesy" Marky professes. "Its just glorified DJing and we want to do it properly," adds XRS. However, they are not without their problems. The extreme distinctions in wealth between the UK and Brazil hardly go without notice and as Marky confesses "It's a big problem". Clearly it is horrendously expensive to bring musicians over from Brazil and since they want to do it properly, there's a bit of a vicious circle arising. XRS explains, "When we do it properly there's like 6 musicians on stage, so you have to pay for the hotels, tickets and everything else." Not disheartened, the two are taking their time to create the best sounding show they can.

The money issues are undeniably apparent in Brazil but still the locals are known for their fervent passion for music. Many British dnb fans will go to Brazil specifically for the music, especially to Sao Paulo, where Marky's night at Lov.e is unparalleled. However, the locals always hold it down until the bittersweet end. Marky is quick to rationalize their habits, "A lot of people rely on public transport and have to go to work, so many will go to the club and stay until 6 or 8 in the morning and go straight to work afterwards." Mind you, few people, whoever they are will leave Lov.e much before the end. Does the resident know how special it is? "Yeah, I love it, the atmosphere is great. It is part of my heart". Marky has been doing Lov.e now for 6 years and it is the longest running drum 'n' bass night in Brazil. XRS is eager to express his own views, "Playing there is such a magical thing, to see people's reactions. You see your friends in there and now it's just like a family." Along with the additional regular visitor to the UK; Patife and others like Drumagick and Koloral, the family contingent is complete.

Over the last year or so the length of time when at least one of the Brazilian members isn't in the UK, is getting more and more brief and their long stints away from the British fans are becoming more infrequent. Having just returned to South America from the UK for a couple of weeks they are back in Europe at the beginning of March for another month or so and XRS is even planning to stay in England for at least 3 months over the summer. Marky's bond with the UK is unquestionable but his home will always be where his residency is: "Sometimes when my manager tells me I am going to London I feel really sad for weeks because I want to stay in Brazil and play at my club."

Marky's passion for the music and DJing has always been a talking point. When anyone sees him play at a club they cannot help to notice his uncontrollable enthusiasm behind the decks, flailing his arms, head-banging and generally looking like he's having a fucking good time. What's the answer? Simple – "because I love the music. Its real me. When I'm at the decks I forget everything, all my problems, the studio, the stress." Its that simple.

These two men are clearly all about the music but one thing that defines them from any other dnb maestro is their ability to smile! Something that seems lost from the other dnb dons. They've never done that moody pretension, which is a welcome relief in a predominantly aloof scene. XRS smiles, "Its just not us". "Its our job to make people happy, not to make people angry" chuckles Marky. It's a good attitude to take. "I'm a happy bastard", too fucking right you are Marky!

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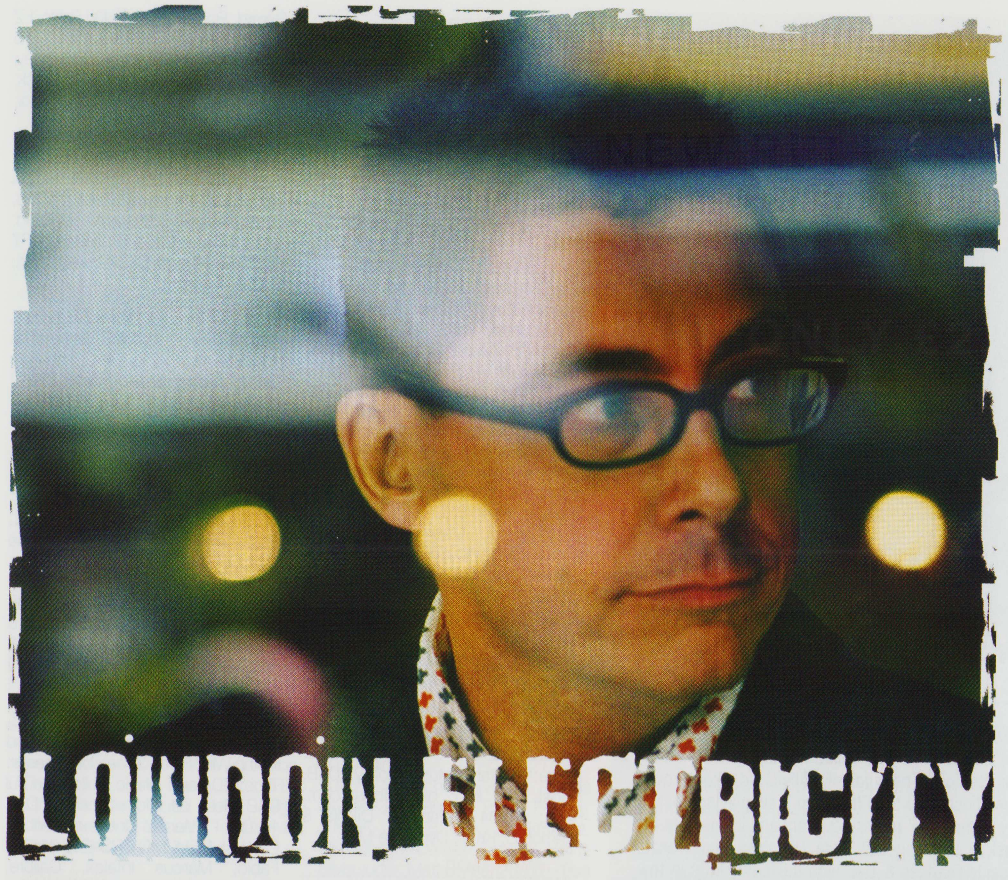

The Move - California Man

I first heard this when I was 7, and it was the tune that first made me want to be in a band. I think it was the heavy saxophone section and Roy Wood's beard that did it.

Tonto's Expanding Head Band - Riversong

Still one of the greatest prog synth albums of all time - produced by Malcolm Cecil and Robert Margouleff who co-produced and programmed the synths on all of Stevie Wonder's best albums from the '70s. Definitely shaped my approach to programming synths.

Chic - Le Freak

14 years old, spotty, stupid hair, home counties disco, drunk on cider, fit girl (taller than me), reckoned I smashed it on the dancefloor, then the guitar intro to Le Freak comes on and I knew... live hard, party harder, die young. Except now and I'm old and I'm still alive. Just!

Grandmaster Flash - The Message

I learned this off by heart and used to stand in front of the mirror rapping it verbatim, making myself cry at the sad bits every time. Still gets me - it's got a proper build throughout the tune that's all about driving the emotion forward to a climax.

Goldie - Inner City Life

A real life changer for me. Rob Playford and Goldie turned a lot of heads with the Timeless album, and this tune said it all for me and it put me on the path.

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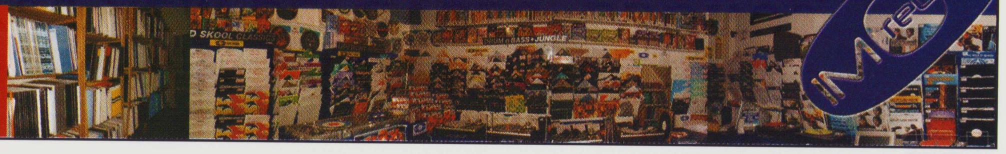


ATM Tour @ Venom - 23/01/04 - Zest, Ipswich

Had been looking forward to this night for a while. Heard a lot of good things about Venom and had previously been to this venue at some of it's previous incarnations. Venom seems to be somewhat of a local legend in Ipswich, acheiving the enviable mission of guaranteeing a full house.

So, enough of the babble, on the bill tonight was Brockie, Kenny Ken, Phantasy, Bassline Smith, Frenzic, Fearless, Det and Riddla. We arrived early doors to be treated to Fobia and Joe 90's rollin' first hour session. Bassline Smith touched down at 10 with MC Flex and when I say this guy tore down, I mean it! Some would say this club is a bit glitzy but it kinda works still: showers for the podium dancers, jacuzzi and 3 rooms of sound. Next up in the main room was Brockie who rolled out in his usual unimitable fashion. The sparcely filled old skool room opened hosted by the Planetdnb crew playing host to many of the sites' roster. 12.30am and it was time for a back 2 back special from Phantasy and Frenzic alongside Fearless & Det, with these two MCs in tow it was sure to get the crowd in a frenzy! We wandered upstairs to check the gal filled R&B room, trust me this room never fails to dissapoint. Downstairs for the last hour and Kenny Ken stepped up alongside Riddla, opening with his 'Fire rmx' and showing the die hard crowd what he's made of. Overall a great night was had in this 1500 or so capacity venue. **Craig Jay**

ATM Tour @ Decode - 09/01/04 - Ether, Taunton

Let me just say one thing, Taunton is far. So far in fact that you have to dial international to phone home! After the horrendous journey and a dodgy experience at Burger King myself (Frenzic) and MC Flex finally arrived in the South West. After checking in to the hotel we made our way down to the club. Kinda underground and dingy is the first impression you get when entering this place. But the system was thumping and the crowd were loving it. I was on at 11 so after doing the usual running through the crowd and scrambling for tunes manoeuvre made it on just in the nick of time. Foxy manned the mic as beats were rolled. Bryan Gee took to the stage next and boy did he hurt them, but you knew that already!! The mighty South West warrior, Tech Itch took to the stage next and delivered his usual brand of punishment whilst I went upstairs to the Cocktail bar and learnt how 'not' to make cocktails. A thoroughly enjoyable night with good vibes and party atmosphere with plenty of alcohol thrown in for good measure. **Frenzic**

weekly nights

>minimelt
Freq: Every Tues. Venue: Ocean Rooms, Brighton. Time: 10-2am. Cost: £3. Music Policy: D&B. Info: 01273 688886. DJs: Ed Solo, JFB, Drift. MC's Jeopardy, TC Izlam (NYC), Darrison, Det, JT, Junior Red. 13/04 - Residents night. 20/04 - London Electricity.

>swerve
Freq: Every Wed. Venue: The Lounge Bar, The End, West Central St, London, WC2. Time: 10-3am. Cost: £6. Music Policy: D&B. Info: 020 7471 4777. DJs: inc Fabio, XRS, Marky, Addiction, Bryan Gee, Flight, Bailey, Carter, Storm, Total Science, Patife, Fabio.

>therapy session
Freq: 3rd Wed of month. Venue: Herbal, Kingsland Rd, Shoreditch, London, E2. Time: 9-2am. Music Policy: D&B, Hip Hop. Cost: £5. Info: venue. DJs: 21/04 - Concord Dawn, Dylan, Friction, Black Sun Empire, Robyn Chaos. Bomb Squad + Guests. 19/05 - (B'day): Pendulum, C4C, Raiden, Counterstrike, SDM. Bomb Squad + Guests.

>big bad bass
Freq: 1st Wed of month. Venue: Plastic People, 149 Curtain Rd, EC2. Time: 10-2am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £6. Info: bigbadbass.com. DJs: 07/04 - Friction, Dillinja & Lemon D, Krust, Dynamite MC.

>new nation
Freq: Every Thurs (from Apr 1st). Venue: Station, Chertsey Road, Woking, Surrey. Time: 8-2am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £5. Info: 07956 644415. DJs: 15/04 - Friction & MC Riddla, Fluid & MC Flight, Faze & Sub Terra, DJ Reflex. 22/04 - Fluid & MC Foxy, Sub Zero b2b Funktion, DJ Switch b2b Alien, Sub Terra b2b Sonna. 29/04 - Kool FM: Funky Flirt & MC Eksman, Fluid & Filthy Dirty Rich, Fluid b2b DJ Sub, DJ Faze b2b Montee.

>ambush
Freq: Every Thurs (from 22nd Apr). Venue: Watershed Nightclub, Wimbledon. Time: 9-2am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £5. Info: venue. DJ's: including Andy C, Bad Company, Friction, Bailey plus Frequency, Upakut & Relm.

>bodyrock
Freq: 4th Thurs of month. Venue: Turnmills, 63b Clerkenwell Rd, London, EC1M. Time: 9-3am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £6. Info: 0207 250 3409. DJ's: 29/04 - Mickey Finn, L Double, Grooverider, Cleveland Watkiss. 27/05 - Mickey Finn and more TBC.

>koncept
Freq: Fortnightly Thurs. Venue: Bar Academy, Dale End, Birmingham. Time: 9-2am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £3. Info: 0701 741 7419. DJs: 15/04 - Zen, Escape, Disfunktion, Konspiracy, Insight. Plus MC Biggie, Accapello, Smilee, PM.

>movement
Freq: Every Thursday. Venue: Bar Rumba, 36 Shaftesbury Ave, London, WC1. Time: 8.30-3am. Cost: £6. Music Policy: D&B, Beatz. Info: 0207 377 9494. DJs: Bryan Gee, Ray Keith, Marky, Patife, Ruffstuff, Addiction, Darrison, IC3, Moose, Stamina MC. 08/04 - DJ Die, Gerard, Rohan. 15/04 - DJ Patife, EZ Rollers, Cleveland Watkiss (TBC), MC Fats (TBC), DJ Chook & DJ Stoney. 22/04 - Grooverider (TBC), Deadlock. 29/04 - DJ Marky, Marvel & DJ Major.

fridays

>basstrap sessions
Freq: Every Friday. Venue: Bambu, South Bridge, Edinburgh, Scotland. Time: 9-1am. Cost: £0. Info: 07887 676061. Music: D&B/Breaks. DJs: G Mac & guests.

>manga: edinburgh
Freq: 3rd Fri of month. Venue: The Honeycomb, Niddry St, Edinburgh. Time: 11-3am. Music Policy: D&B / Breaks. Cost: £9. Info: 0788 767 6061 / basstrap.com. DJs: 16/04 - DJ SS. Wreckage, Son of Ugly. 14/05 - Ed Rush. Plus G-Mac, DJ Kid, The General, MC Sonny.

>manga: glasgow
Freq: Last Fri of Month. Venue: The Subclub, 22 Jamaica St, Glasgow, Scotland. Time: 11-3am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £9. Info: 0788 767 6061. DJs: 30/04 - Peshay & MC Moose. 28/05 - DJ Marky & Stamina MC (TBC). Plus G Mac, DJ Kid, The General, MC Sonny.

>soul:ution
Freq: 3rd Fri of Month. Venue: Band on the Wall, Swan Street, Manchester. Time: 10-3am. Music Policy: Soulful D&B. Cost: £8. Info: soulr.co.uk. DJs: 16/04 - Marcus Intalex, Calibre, Catalyst, MD & MC DRS (£5). 21/05 - Fabio, Marcus Intalex, Calibre, Catalyst, MD & MC DRS.

>meltdown
Freq: 3rd Fri of month. Venue: Beach Club, Brighton Sea Front. Time: 10-3am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £8.50. Info: 01273 608886. DJ's: 16/04 - Ram: Andy C, Moving' Fusion, Shimon. 21/05 - Formation. Plus Quantum, JFB, Ed Solo.

>technique pres interface
Freq: First Fri of Month. Venue: The Gatehouse, Friargate, City Centre, Derby. Time: 10-4am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £7. Info: 07903 50 22 22. DJs: 07/05 - Mampi Swift (TBC), Bassline Smith, Drumsound. 04/06 - Fabio, Bassline Smith, Drumsound.

>drive by: raising the level
Freq: First Fri of Month. Venue: Level, 24 Park Row, Bristol. Time: 10-late. Music Policy: D&B / Hip Hop. Cost: £7. Info: 07976 210767. DJ's: 07/05 - Bingo: DJ Zinc, Friction, MC Eksman, Gerard. 04/06 - Shy FX, Danny Wheeler, Amo, Sweet Pea. 02/07 - Grooverider, Bailey, Gerard, Amo, MC Sweet Pea. Plus MC Retna, Money & The Tech.

>metropolis
Freq: First Fri of Month. Venue: Phoenix, Oxford Road, M'cr. Time: 10-4am. Music Policy: D&B / Hip Hop. Cost: £8. Info: 0161 834 8341. DJs: 02/04 - ATM: Ed Rush, Pendulum, Baron, Frenzic, Mark OD, Prophecy, MC Tonn Piper, Flex. 07/05 - High Contrast + guests, Prophecy, Mark OD, MC Tonn Piper, Deval.

>x
Freq: 2nd Fri of month. Venue: Carling Academy, Hotham St, Liverpool. Time: 10-3am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £7. Info: 07740 634405. DJs: 09/04 - Viper / ATM: Frenzic, Futurebound, Sol & Xample, Jaquan & Codek, MC S & SAS. 14/05 - X / Stepback: Mampi Swift, Friction, Nicky Blackmarket, Ratpack, Futurebound, Sol & Xample + more.

>bassix
Freq: First Fri of Month. Venue: Enigma Nightclub, Regent St, Cheltenham. Time: 10-3am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £8. Info: venue. DJ's: 07/05 - DJ Zinc, Gerard, MC Shabba, Poison, MC Lady Blaze. 04/06 - Andy C, MC Eksman, Final Reckoning. Plus Access, Kontagious, MC Dread, MC Stansa, MC Quasa.

>sophonic
Freq: 3rd Fri of month. Venue: Zanzibar, Seel St, Liverpool. Time: 10-3am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £5. Info: sol@nwdnb.co.uk. DJs: 16/04 - Sol & Xample, Kaleida, Impact, Sloss, Entity, MC SAS / Deval. 21/05 - Randall, Sol & Xample, Markive, MC's SAS / Deval (£7).

>momentum
Freq: Last Fri of month. Venue: Think Tank, Call lane, Leeds. Time: 10-3am. Music Policy: Soulful D&B. Cost: £5. Info: momentumu@yahoo.com. DJs: 30/04 - High Contrast, Stress Level & TC1, Subvert, JC.

>hospitality
Freq: 3rd Fri of month. Venue: Herbal, Kingsland Rd, Shoreditch, London, E2. Time: 9-3am. Music Policy: D&B / Beats. Cost: £6. Info: hospital-records.com. DJs: 16/04 - London Elektricity, Nu:Tone, Danny Byrd, JFB, Landslide, Chris Goss. 21/05 - High Contrast, Social Security, Tomahawk. Dom Servini, Chris Goss.

>source
Freq: Last Fri of Month. Venue: The Zodiac, Cowley Rd, Oxford. Time: 10.30-4am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £8. Info: 01865 420042. DJ's: 23/04 - Matrix, Keaton, Jay Jay. Plus Frosty, Raw, Azonica, Vyper, Reaction, MC Manikular, Lady Blaze.

>detonate
Freq: last Fri of month. Venue: The Bomb, Bridlesmith Gate, Nottingham. Time: 10-3.30am. Music Policy: D&B / Hip Hop. Cost: £8. Info: 07957 545317. DJs: 23/04 - Last Detonate at The Bomb: Zinc, Friction, Transit Mafia, Shaolin, MC Dynamite, MC E-LL. DJ A'la Fu, Santero, Detail. Hexadecimal, Problem Child.

>escape
Freq: First Fri of Month. Venue: The Chapel Bar, Penton St, Islington, London. Time: 9-2am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £ree. Info: venue. DJs: inc J-Laze, T West, Sabre, MC System.

>autumn
Freq: Fortnightly Fri. Venue: The Medicine Bar, Birmingham. Time: 9-3am. Music Policy: D&B / Hip Hop. Cost: £7. Info: autumnbirmingham.co.uk. DJs: 16/04 - Photek, DJ Lee plus Shaolin, Benny the Goat and Dan B.

>breakneck
Freq: Last Fri of month. Venue: The Gaiety Suite, Portsmouth Pier. Time: 9-2am. Music Policy: D&B / Techno. Cost: £11. Info: break-neck.com. DJs: 30/04 - Goldie, Friction, Baron, SDM vs Triple M, MC SP, Freestyle, Throcker. Mark EG, Tod Livingstone.

>detonate
Freq: last Fri of month. Venue: Stealth, Goldsmith St, Nottingham. Time: 10-3.30am. Music Policy: D&B / Hip Hop. Cost: £10. Info: 07957 545317. DJs: 28/05 - Ed Rush, Keaton, Transit Mafia, MC SP, MC E-LL. Jehst, Asaviour & IQ, Detail, Santero. DJ E.A.S.E + more…

>fabric live
Freq: Every Friday. Venue: 77a Charterhouse Street, London EC1. Time: 9.30-5am. Cost: £12. Info: fabriclondon.com. Music Policy: D&B / Breaks. DJs: 16/04 - Wall of Sound: DJ Spinbad, Killa Kela, Scratch Perverts, Skitz & Rodney P, Vinyl Dialect (live). Full Cycle: Krust, DJ Die, Grooverider, Ed Rush & Optical, Clipz, Surge, Dynamite MC, MC Navigator, Foxy & Sweetpea. Junior Sanchez, The Visitor, Switch. 23/04 - James Lavelle, The Freestylers, Fat Freddys Drop (live), Ali B, Babyhead (live). Breakbeat Kaos: Adam F, Zinc, Shy FX, Pendulum, Pascal, Danny Wheeler, TKO & MC Boom Tac, MC GQ, Fats & Flux. Richard X, Krafty Kuts, Joe Ransom. 30/04: True Playaz - DJ Hype, Zinc, Pascal, Krust, Hazard, Wildchild, Dynamite MC, MC GQ, Fats & AD. Hybrid, FreQ Nasty, Hyper, Dub Pistols. Ali B, Joe Ransom. 07/05 - Audio Bullys, Marc Hughes. Cubik: Peshay, Grooverider, MCs Moose. Orchestral World Groove vs Swaraj. 14/05 - Plump DJs, UNKLE, Stanton Warriors, Ali B. Andy C, DJ Hype, Mampi Swift, High Contrast, Addiction, Maximus, MC Rage, 2Shy & SP:MC. Roots Manuva (DJ Set), DJ Vadim, Joe Ransom. 21/05 - RJD2, Scratch Perverts, James Lavelle, Joe Ransom. Fabio, Peshay, J Majik, John B, Nicky Blackmarket, MC Moose. Damien Lazarus, Kiki & Silversurfer, Matt Styles. 28/05 - True Playaz: DJ Hype (2hr Set), Zinc, Pascal, Andy C, Bryan Gee, Hazard, MC GQ, Fats, Rage & AD. Phil Hartnoll, Meat Katie. Skitz & Rodney P, Deadly Avenger, Joe Ransom.

saturdays

>kinetic
First Sat of month. Venue: The Coven II, Oxpens rd, Oxford. Time: 10-4am. Music Policy: D&B / Hip Hop. Cost: £8. Info: 07930 531223. DJs: 01/05 - Kamanchi (Die, Krust, Tali), Skinnyman, DJ 279. 05/06 - Ray Keith, SS, Eksman, Herbsman. 03/07 - Kenny Ken, Mickey Finn, Foxy and Fatman D. Plus Mikee Hussla, Juicy, Melodize, DJ Bright, Dan Fraser.

>drive by vs infidelity
Freq: 2nd Sat of Month. Venue: Babylon, Kingston Road, Bath. Time: 10-2am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £4. Info: 07976 210767. DJ's: 10/04 - Hype. 08/05 - Grooverider. 12/06 - Bryan Gee. 10/07 - Shy FX. 14/08 - Andy C. Plus Gerard, Jeckal, MC Blaze, MC Risky.

>devotion
Freq: Last Sat of month. Venue: The Concorde 2, Madeira Dr, Brighton. Time: 10-3am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £10. Info: 0702 1199090. DJs: 28/04 - Krust, DJ SS, Digital, Black Sun Empire. 29/05 - Old Skool: Ratpack, Slipmatt, Ellis Dee, Rob Redford, Youngsta.

>tremorz
Freq: 3rd Sat of Month. Venue: Rhythms in Indigo, Northumberland St, Huddersfield. Time: 10-3am. Music Policy: D&B / Old Skool. Cost: £8. Info: 07786 885592. DJs: 17/04 - Bassline Smith, Steppa, Youngman, Alibi, Octane, MC Coppa and Ramin. 15/05 - Grooverider, Steppa, Supadark, Octane, Da Holsta, MC Mojo, Ballistic B2B Navarone.

Interface - 09/01/04 - Gatehouse, Derby

On the 9th January we decided to venture out of the South East and hit Derby for the Technique Recordings Label night called Interface at the Gatehouse. The label owned by Simon Bassline Smith & Drumsound has built up quite a reputation for itself, especially in 2003 with some killer releases. I was interested to see how the ravers reacted in the Midlands to the music that is more known to be popular in the South East.

We got there to hear Drumsound dropping one of my all time classics of last year, "Signs" by the Irish genius Calibre, baaaaaaaddddddddddd tune. The set was soon hardened up though with "Foreigner" by BC's Fresh with the lyrical talent of the Midlands' own MC Biggie.

The vibe was wicked, everyone was so friendly there and I made quite a few raving friends. Stepping up next was Simon Bassline Smith, smashing it with "Don't tell Me" by Concord Dawn sending the place crazy. This is one of my personal favorites on the dance floor, you can't help but move to this. This was appreciated by the crowd all around. As we were standing at the back near the bar, people started rushing on to the dance floor from the seats near the bar. Truly hyped up the place. Then came "Nosher rmx", proper bouncy tune, just saw pure heads popping up and down on the dancefloor. Hosted by Biggie who was getting the crowd hyper as he MC'ed at the ravers from the platform. Went up stairs to the other bar and chilled up there for a bit but came rushing back down when the next DJ, MainFrame dropped Andy C's classic "Screamer".

Next on the decks was DJ Youngman with a truly dancefloor set. Ravers rocking up stairs, on the stairs and downstairs. The club had a nice crowd with no attitude and was nicely packed out. You can catch Technique on the first Friday of every month. I would recommend that if you want to get out the area and see different faces, head here. **DJ Turbulence**

Jungle FX - 30/01/04 - The Old Firestation, Bristol

The scale of the first Bristol outing for the Jungle FX crew was made obvious by the healthy queue as we arrived a little after 11, just in time to catch the end of Grooverider's warm up set, accompanied by Lady MC and MC Dyer. By all accounts Rider smashed it, but the hipstep sistaz were not to everyone's tastes. They quickly moved on as Randall arrived alongside the MC Fearless. This was the set of the night for many, as Randall's up front selection just doesn't ever disappoint, and Fearless was on top form, joined about halfway through by TC Izlam, a heavy combination!

As Vegas and Maldini arrived, the venue was already starting to fly off the hook, the main room packed out when Det arrived to take it to another level. The highlight from the Bad Company boys was a double drop of "The Nine" and "Snowcat", which nearly tore down the sweatbox that is The Station.

Up next, the DJ Brockie opened with "System Check", and went on to drop a crowd pleasing selection, which as always went down well, alongside Det, Riddla and TC Izlam. All the MC's then cleared the stage for UK Apache, who did his thing after a quick rant about Bush and Blair. This was perfect timing, as the airing of 'Nuttah' led perfectly into the intro of the one Kenny Ken, who played some real classics to round off the night, the highlight being a quick rinse of "Everyman". Fun and Moose made an appearance, and finally Shabba arrived to round off one of the best big nights Bristol has seen for a long time. **Owen**

1Xtra Bass Week - Feb '04 - Countrywide

It's all bullshit really. In recent times there have been too many people that feel the need to express their theories on the threatened life span of drum n bass. Whatever. We all know its bollocks and right now everyone from DJ's, producers, promoters and establishments are spreading their musical seeds in an eager frenzy. Over the last 18 months or so 1Xtra have been high up in the pursuit for promoting drum n bass to the masses. At a time when live events and gigs are more popular than ever, this year's Xtra Bass Week happened during a significant time, comprising live DJ broadcasts and a special live performance.

The Xtra Bass Week has been done before, last year and it kicked off then. However, whereas last year's Xtra Bass Week was more of an experiment, an introduction to 1Xtra, this time round was bound to be a testament to their status. After a year of immense success this was the icing on the cake. They could clearly take their chances in going to cities where the dnb scene is less acknowledged and there isn't an overabundance of self-confessed ravers. With one event in Brighton, at the Ocean Rooms and one in Cambridge, at the Fez Club, these are two places that would not immediately spring to mind as the epicentre for massive dnb nights. However, this is just what 1xtra was striving for, showing the dnb love all over the shop. With six events being broadcast live every night from six different cities across the UK, this was a non-stop party for the dnb cognoscenti.

The one night out of the whole week that was going to be a real test to 1Xtra's success was in Cambridge as it was their own event. But, it paid off, and was a favourite of the week by many. The excellent promoters of "Warning" collaborated with the 1Xtra crew, headed up by Ray Paul; the executive producer of specialist programming and live events and they picked the line-up. Bailey, High Contrast, Marcus Intalex, Stamina and DRS were the chosen ones and in many eyes that is a pretty perfect selection. High Contrast and Marcus Intalex were live to the world along with the hundreds of shouts from ecstatic revellers in the club. The whole place was effervescent. The 1Xtra crew were there in full force, sweating their tits off along with everybody else, which is something to pick up on – its so god damn unpretentious. 1Xtra is about nothing else but the music. Having total creative independence means that Radio 1's sister station can be completely innovative, diverse and a pioneering concept. Where else could you listen to something like Keaton and Hive's "Bring It On" at 10.00 in the morning?

1Xtra set out to be a bit different and not go with the usual stereotypes, trying to nurture hungry talent when they can and encourage the level of grass roots activity. For the Bass Week, 1Xtra held an on-air competition for a contending DJ to have their own one-hour show before the live broadcast on the night of Innovation at the Sanctuary. Winner W.K.D from Dunstable tore it up and who knows, we could be seeing a lot more of him soon. DJ Flight has a guest mix on the first Friday of every month called "Breaking New Talent" on her show "The Next Chapter" where a listener gets the chance to prove their worth on the decks.

This week wasn't just about being on the decks though. Doing it live is being taken to a whole new level right now and drum n bass is no exception. Last year London Elektricity began their live tour campaign and it culminated in some fabulous sets at the Jazz Café. "The scene is changing a lot" explains Jungle Drummer who is on the pulse right now doing projects with Rodney P, Killa Kella, L Double and of course, London Elektricity. To be honest, one can see what he means – the echelons of dnb are so wholesome that the quality is almost impenetrable. But, the drumming master didn't used to think so; "I didn't like jungle because it wasn't live". So, he decided to try it out himself and can now drum a marathon of up to 200bpm. Watching him is really quite mesmerizing and along with the crew of London Elektricity at Cargo on the opening night of Bass Week, this was truly unsurpassed.

The Jungle Drummer continued his exhausting display of hand skills in Sheffield the next day along with L Double and Rodney P and proved he's rather handy against a DJ as well as on a live tip. Out of the whole week, tonight was something a little more experimental with Rodney P performing for a dnb crowd and of course, L Double Djing with Jungle Drummer but it came off a treat. DJ Die finished off the broadcast with a load of Full Cycle dubs and this was another one that smashed it.

The night in Brighton was something to get vocal about. There have always been a lot of comparisons made between Friction and Andy C and there definitely could have been a bit of standard dnb moodiness gwaan but not here. Andy was on first maintaining his superlative abilities, but Friction held the stage like it was his own, perhaps as Brighton is his home town, mixing it up in true dirty style. Navigator and SP were on the mic, making the whole event sound heavy. These are two MC's that not only have their own styles, and lyrical make-up, but are utterly professional and were committed to promoting 1xtra, which is a refreshing change to so many MC's who carry that pretension.

Friday and Saturday were probably the two biggest raves of the week, being held at Sankey's Soap in Manchester and The Sanctuary in Milton Keynes. The Tribal Sessions night in Manchester turned out to be a very special and unique event thanks to a closure on the M56, which meant that Hype and Andy C did a back-to-back session, a first for two of the scene's most prolific DJ's. The night was rammed and amongst the queues outside, tickets were being touted all over the shop. 1Xtra's Sappo kicked off proceedings and along with the prodigious talent of Killa Kella, once again 1xtra rocked the boat.

Innovation at The Sanctuary was a classic rave, combining the essential elements of heavy tunes with a funfair! With whistles and dodgems ablazing, Bailey, Mickey Finn and SS played the sickest tunes while Skibadee, Det and Fearless relayed the usual "muna muna ma" discourse.

You could never accuse 1Xtra of watering down the amount of music that gets played on the radio or for being another corporate sycophantic station, only playing to boost ratings and catering to the majority. That's exactly what they don't do. With live events like Xtra Bass Week 1Xtra continue to strive for musical excellence and from the basis of this week they're here to show some dnb love baby. **Jo Sharff**

>accelerated culture

Freq: Last Sat of month. Venue: Air (formerly Code), Heathmill Lane, Digbeth, Birmingham. Time: 10-5am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £15. Info: acceleratedculture.com. DJs: 24/04 - Andy C, Zinc, Friction, Brockie, Nicky Blk Mkt, Dollar, MC Dynamite, Det, Fearless, Presha. Formation: DJ SS, Twisted Individual, Influx Datum, Generation Dub, Zen, MC Biggie.

>submerge

Freq: First Sat of month. Venue: Gretskys, Hayes Bridge Rd, Cardiff. Time: 10-4am. Music Policy: Liquid D&B, Deep House. Cost: £7. Info: submerge@btinternet.com. DJs: 03/04 - Calibre, Leckie, Lubi J.

sundays

>no frills

Freq: Every Sun. Venue: Hackney Central, (former BR Station), Amhurst Rd, Hackney, London, E8. Time: 8-12am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £6. Info: 07985 300 121. DJs: 11/04 - OSV: Brockie, Ron, Devious D, Funky Flirt, Jack Knife, MC TC Islam, 5ive O, Fearless, Shockin'. 18/04 - Kenny Ken, JJ Frost, DJ Ron, Ital, MC Flinty Bad Man, Remedy. 25/04 - Andy C, JJ Frost, Brockie, Marly Marl, MC GQ, Det.

>grace

Freq: Every Sunday. Venue: Herbal, Kingsland Rd, Shoreditch, London, E2. Time: 9-2am. Music Policy: D&B / Breaks. Cost: £5. Info: venue. DJs: 11/04 - Grooverider, Andy C, L Double, MC Rage. Siya, Joe Ransom. 18/04 - Grooverider, Fabio, DJ Flight, MC GQ. Sharma, Maurice. 25/04 - Grooverider, Adam F, XO, MC Five Alive. Blakey, Moreno. 01/05 - Fabio, Goldie, L Double, MC Moose. Whut, Moreno.

>fallout

Freq: First Sun of Month. Venue: Funky Buddha Lounge, Brighton Seafront. Time: 9-1am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £5. Info: venue. DJs: 04/04 - John B. Plus High Rankin, Rhekluse, Insight, Shuga, Collena.

>intrigue

Freq: Every Sun. Venue: The Soda Bar, Frogmore Street, Bristol. Time: 8-late. Music Policy: Soulful D&B. Cost: £0. Info: 07773 195 949. DJs: The Insiders plus guests.

one offs

>resonate

Date: Mon 5th Apr. Venue: Corks Wine Bar (opp Selfridges), 28 Binney Street, London, W1K. Time: 10-1am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £5. Info: venue. DJs: on rotation Moving Fusion, Red One and more with Cel, Dappa, Jeff Cellini, Warlord.

>revolution

Date: Thurs 8th Apr. Venue: Mango, Hosiier Rd, Reading. Time: 9-2am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £7. Info: 07787 176587. DJs: Nicky Blk Mkt, Blaze, Darka, Dark Red, Pressure, XS, Hicks, Kryptonite, Hoodlum, Shabba, Eksman, Flyte, Diablo, Fleximus.

>bio rhythm & manga

Date: Fri 9th Apr. Venue: Liquid Rooms, Victoria St, Edinburgh. Time: 7-11pm. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £9. Info: club-manga.co.uk. Live: London Elektricity. DJs: G-Mac, DJ Kid.

>bio rhythm

Date: Fri 9th Apr. Venue: Honeycomb, Niddry St, Edinburgh. Time: 9-late. Music Policy: Breaks, D&B. Cost: £10. Info: the-honeycomb.co.uk. DJs: Stanton Warriors, Believe, Silver Storic. Nu:Tone, Landslide.

>decode

Date: Fri 9th Apr. Venue: Ether, 2 Church Sq, Taunton. Time: 8-2am. Music Policy: D&B / Breaks. Cost: £8. Info: info@clubether.co.uk. DJ's: Zinc, Clipz, Deep, Mr Nice, Dark Dean, Shafie, Ers, Talon, MC Shabba, Manic.

>best of british 5th b'day

Date: Sat 10th Apr. Venue: Canvas (Bagleys), York Way, Kings Cross, London. Time: 10-6am. Music Policy: D&B / Old Skool. Cost: £18. Info: thebestofbritish.uk.com. DJs: Mampi Swift, Blame, Ray Keith, Nicky Blackmarket, Zinc, Mickey Finn, Darren Jay, R Type, Swan E, Kenny Ken, Crissy Chris, Fluid, Filthy Dirty Rich. MC Moose, IC3, Fearless, Det, Foxy, Navigator, Ragga Twins, 5iveO, Skibadee, Riddla, Flyte, Rizla. Devious D, Playa, Vinyl Junkie, DMS, Food Junkie. MC Will. Ratpack, Squirrel, Lock Up, Vibes, Deekline, Ollywood, Swifty B, Nicky Dimensions, Flashback. MC Strict, Cash, Lady Harmony. Hoodlum, Wagner, Elegance, Slim D, Motion, DJ Spice, MC Shockin, Lok I, Joker D.

>koncept

Date: Sat 10th Apr. Venue: Dance Factory, Digbeth High St, Birmingham. Time: 10-5am. Music Policy: D&B, Old Skool. Cost: £10. Info: 0701 741 7419. DJs: DJ SS, Nicky Blackmarket, Twisted Individual, Escape, Konspiracy, Alpha, MC Foxy, Biggie, Maveric, Accapello, Smilee. Glenn Aston, Nexus, Unison, Cybergroove, Ir-Daz-E, GT, Ponder, Astro, MC PM, Blast.

>venom

Date: Sun 11th Apr. Venue: Zest (Kartouche), Princes St, Ipswich. Time: 9.30-5am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £12. Info: 01473 230 666. DJ's: Randall, Ed Rush, Twisted Individual, Unix, MC Skibadee, Fearless, Eksman, Fun, Marty B2B EQ and more TBC.

>desire old skool special

Date: Sun 11th Apr. Venue: The Coronet, London, SE1. Time: 10-6am. Music Policy: Old Skool D&B. Cost: £11. Info: venue. DJ's: Bryan Gee, Zinc, Randall, Kenny Ken, Nicky Blackmarket, Ray Keith, Phantasy, Flapjack, MC GQ, Rage, Det, Flux, Krazy B.

>telepathy & rollercoaster

Date: Mon 12th Apr. Venue: Equinox, Leicester Sq. London. Time: 9.30-4am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £12. Info: 07831 824 400. DJ's: TC Islam, Bryan Gee, Patife, Bailey, Nicky Blackmarket, Filthy Dirty Rich, MC Bassman, TC Islam, DVS, Shabba D, IC3, Dynamite, Joker D.

>system abuse / hardware

Date: Fri 16th Apr. Venue: The Verve Bar, Church Street, Peterborough. Time: 8-2am. Music Policy: D&B / Various. Cost: £7. Info: systemabuse.co.uk. DJs: Loxy, and System Abuse DJs on rotation.

>blended

Date: Fri 16th Apr. Venue: The End, West Central St, London, WC1. Time: 10-5am. Music Policy: D&B / Hip Hop. Cost: £10. Info: 0207 419 9199. DJs: Bad Company UK, DJ Hype, Fabio, High Contrast, Matrix, Trace. MC GQ, Ryme Tyme, Fats. Steve The Sleeve, Massire & special guests Kam & MK.

>digital

Date: Sat 17th Apr. Venue: The Ballroom, Nottingham. Time: 10-6am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £16.50. Info: venue. DJ's: Shy FX, Brockie, Darren Jay, Bailey, Ruffstuff, Unix b2b Shuffle, Strike, Fat Cat, MC Shabba, Eksman, Spyda, Navigator, Riddla, Shortson, Sugars, Carter.

>legends of dark black

Date: Sat 17th Apr. Venue: Mass, St Matthews Church, Bixton, London. Time: 9-5am. Music Policy: D&B / Old Skool. Cost: £15. Info: venue. DJ's: Bad Company UK, J Majik, Randall, Swane, A1, Jamma & Runnin' Man, Dubwise & Scorpion, MC GQ, Eksman, Sgt Pokes, Response, Junior Red. Slipmatt, Ellis Dee, Swane, Squirrel, Enzyme & Malice, Maverick, MJD, MC Jay J, Scruffy D.

>shinobi

Date: Fri 23rd Apr. Venue: Welly Club, Beverley Rd, Hull. Time: 10-3am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £7. Info: venue. DJs: Mickey Finn, Mikey J, Georgey, MC AOB.

>obztin8

Date: Fri 23rd Apr. Venue: The Venue, Braintree. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £7. Info: venue. DJ's: Ellis Dee, Sainty, Gary D, Becks, Brooks, Swanee, Gary D, Switch, Cheetah, MW, MC Stalley, Special Brew, Sensi, Walker.

>repercussion

Date: Fri 30th Apr. Venue: Egg, 200 York Way, Kings Cross, London. Time: 10-6am. Music Policy: D&B / Hip Hop / Deep House. Cost: £12. Info: venue. DJs: Goldie, Doc Scott & DJ Lee, Klute, Bad Company UK & Loxy, DJ Flight, Wylie D & Ollie K, MC Rage, SP MC, Stirlin', Manikular, Lowqui. Phi-Life Cypher, Danny Breaks, Jazz-T, DJ Kam, Closo, Shrubsoul, X-Calibre. Deep Blue, Catalyst, Kasra Critical, Haste, Genius Jones, Manikular, Reference.

>hectic 1st b'day

Date: Fri 30th Apr. Venue: Astairs, Canvey Seafront, Essex. Time: 9-2am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £8. Info: 07958 478917. DJ's: Static, Trust, Slick, MSW, Liam G, MC Flex, Cobra D, Toggy, Velocity.

>jungle magik

Date: Sat 1st May. Venue: The Honeycomb, Niddrie St, Edinburgh. Time: 11-4am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £12. Info: 07973 142195. DJ's: Fabio, Mikey Dean, Jnr Bryson, MC AJ, MC Sonny. DJ Kryptik, Morphy, Code Nine.

>detonation

Date: Sat 1st May. Venue: Ballroom, Lenton Boulevard, Nottingham. Time: 10-6am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £13. Info: 07957 545317. DJ's: Adam F, Krust, Hype, Hazard, Transit Mafia, Trouble, MC Fearless, MC Foxy, MC E-LL, MC Freestyle.

>6ixth sense

Date: Sun 2nd May. Venue: Cheekees, Elmsleigh Rd, Staines, Middlesex. Time: 8-2am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £10. Info: venue. DJs: Andy C, Nicky Blk Mkt, Phantasy, MC Skibadee, Fearless, Eksman, IC3, Flyte.

>ram records

Date: Fri 7th May. Venue: The End, West Central St, London, WC1. Time: 9.30-6am. Music Policy: D&B / Various. Cost: £13. Info: 0207 419 9199. DJs: Andy C, DJ Hype, Moving Fusion, Shimon, Red One & guests. MC GQ & guests. Bryan Gee (Old Skool Set), Jay Cunning, Danny Breaks, Neil Mitchell.

>jungle fx

Date: Sat 8th May. Venue: Old Fire Station, Bristol. Time: 9-4am. Music Policy: D&B / Various. Cost: £10. Info: 07742 000992. DJs: Congo Natty (Live), Mickey Finn, Andy C, Randall, Bad Company, Xander, MC Demolition Man, Fearless, IC3, Skibadee, Det. The Rootsman, The Bug, Simon Scott. Gacid, Psyman Pieman, Xandos.

>chameleon

Date: Sat 15th May. Venue: Hobsons Choice, Butchers Row, Banbury. Time: 9-2am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £7. Info: venue. DJ's: Charge: Mampi Swift, MC IC3, Complex, Sloss, Boots, MC Cobra.

>accelerated culture

Date: Sat 29th May. Venue: The Sanctuary, Denbigh Leisure Park, Bletchley, nr Milton Keynes. Time: 9-6am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £24. Info: 01295 721640. DJ's: Andy C, Mampi Swift, Krust, Pendulum, Fresh, Hype, J Majik, Garry K & Triple T, Bryan Gee, Hazard & Devise, Friction, Mickey Finn, Dollar, Kenny Ken, SS & Twisted Individual, Nicky Blk Mkt, Bassline Smith, Transit Mafia, MC Skibadee, Shabba, Fearless, Det, IC3, Dynamite, Presha, Foxy, GQ, Juiceman, Biggie, Navigator, Shortston.

>deeper thinkin'

Date: Sat 29th May. Venue: THe Verve Bar, Church Street, Peterborough. Time: 8-2am. Music Policy: Soulful D&B. Cost: £7. Info: deeperthinkin@hotmail.com. DJs: Marcus Intalex, Nu Tone, DJ Fobia, DJ Creation, Low Note. MC Bomba.

>drive by / movement

Date: Sun 30th May. Venue: Academy, Frogmore St, Bristol. Time: 10-5am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £12. Info: 07976 210767. DJ's: Andy C, Marky, Bryan Gee, Zinc, Ruffstuff, Die, Jack Frost, Gerard, Stamina MC, Dynamite MC, IC3, Foxy, Tali. Commix, The Insiders, Nu:Tone, A.I.

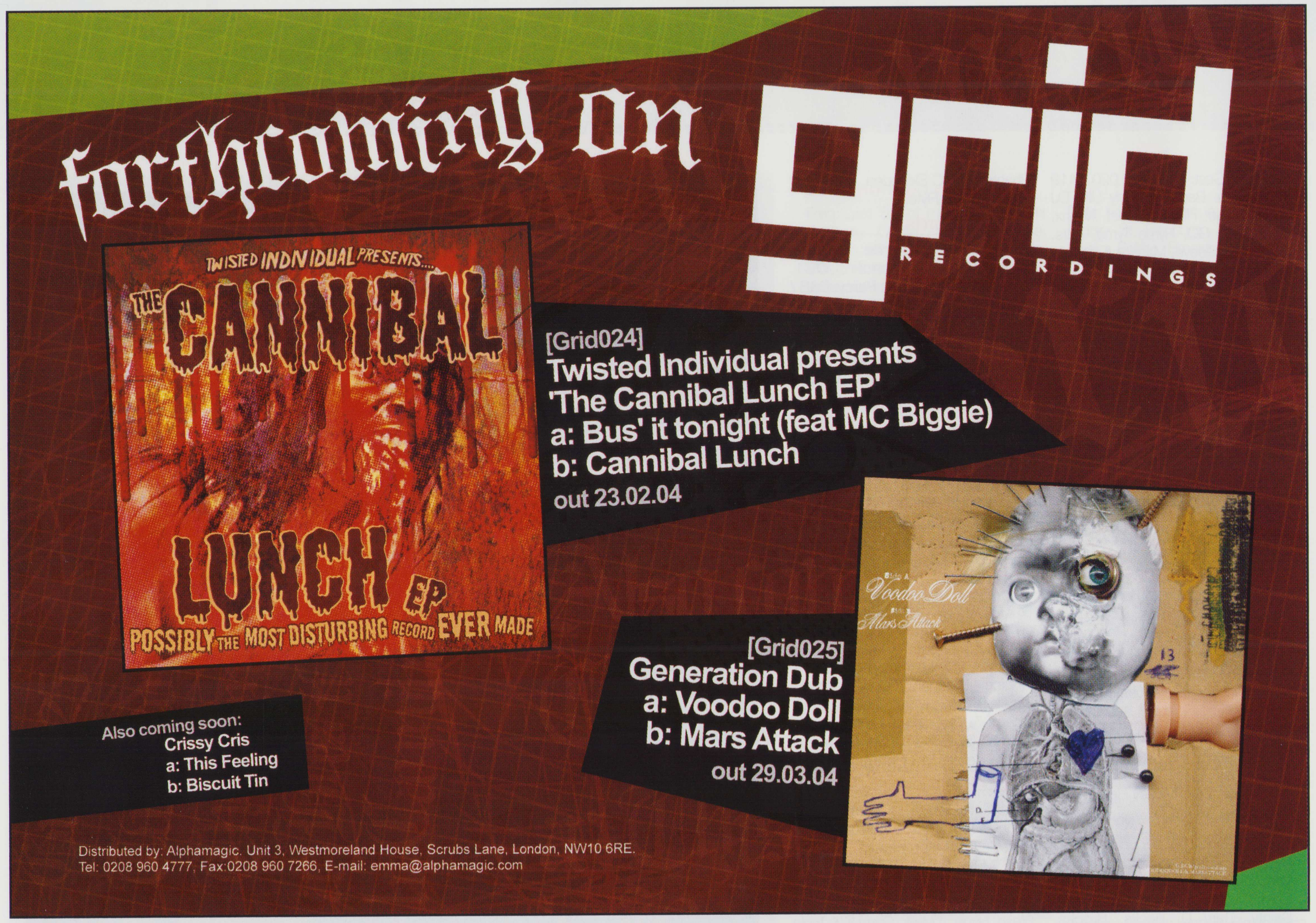
>the love movement

Date: Sun 30th May. Venue: The End, 18 West Central St, London WC1. Time: 11-7am. Music Policy: D&B. Cost: £15. Info: 020 7377 9494. DJ's: Groove Armada Sound System ft Patrick Dawes and MC Mad, DJ Marky & MC Stamina, Bryan Gee, Ross Clarke, Jools Butterfield and Adrian Fillary, DJ Addiction.

>drive by/knights of mc's

Date: Sat 19th June. Venue: Academy, Frogmore St, Bristol. Time: 10-4am. Music Policy: D&B / Hip Hop. Cost: £12. Info: 07976 210767. DJ's: Mampi Swift, Brockie, Bad Company, Friction, JFB, Dynamite MC, Shabba, Det, Fearless, Ragga Twins, Foxy, Eksman, Navigator, plus more. Money & The Tech, Amo, Siesta.

1Xtra Bass Week - Feb '04 - Countrywide



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dj friction

➲ Kryptic Minds - Hide the Tears rmx
Metalheadz

This one has to be my current fave at the moment. The stings and pads in the intro grab your attention within the first few bars, with the haunting hide the tears vocal. Soon, before you know it, the most obscene mentasm riff comes in, soon joined by some tasty breakage. Typical, classic Metalheadz.

➲ Dillinja - In The Grind - Valve

The bass master comes with his latest lasher for the dancefloor. 'In the grind' has been a favourite of mine for the past month or so. Tried and tested formula of lashings of reece and ear bending sub, this one always gets a reaction. Also keep your eyes peeled for 'Rainforest', where Dillinja shows his other side, pure rolling beats and bass, taking you on a tropical journey.

➲ Calibre & ST Files - Red light - Soul:R

This tune is hurting me so bad right now. I think a lot of people are calling it Mystical Jungle, but its actually called 'Red Light' and it's a collaboration between ST Files and Calibre. I think the two things that make the tune are the wicked dub samples and catch sub bass hook, makes me play the tune over and over again. This crew can do no wrong.

➲ Dylan & Loxy - Fraggle Rock
(Raiden rmx) - Hardware

This is my favourite piece from Raiden since 'Fallin' which came out on Hardware about a year ago.Taking Dylan and Loxy's dance floor smasher and twisting it right up into a hideously nasty roller. Check this one out LOUD!

➲ Friction, Nu Balance & Shanie
Soul Surfer - Valve

Some of you may remember Shanies, 'Your Gonna Miss My Face' track from about 5 or 6 years ago. Well shes back on the drum and bass tip with a track called 'Soulsurfer' with myself and Nu Balance. Keeping things on more of a mellow rolling tip, this is one for the summertime and I'm looking forward to seeing the reaction to this one in the clubs.

➲ Jo - R Type (Shogun Audio mix)
Shogun Audio

Thought I'd squeeze this one in because it's the first release on my own label, Shogun Audio, although you all probably know that by now anyway. Myself and Frenzic's remix of the mighty R-Type is due for release on April 12th with the original version on the flip. Also don't forget, the new Hardware LP, 'Skool Of Hard Knocks' should be out in the shops now as well and is a must have for all the beat freaks!!!

marcus intalex

➲ St:Cal - Red Light / Little Man

While I was at home eating toast and drinking tea, the other two members of Mist:i:cal decided to make these two Dub influenced monsters. 'Red Light' has an old school jungle feel with referances to a certain other Marcus and 'Little Man' is just a simple, hypnotic D&B groove: badness. I must eat less toast.

➲ Amit - Pirates - Metalheadz

More dubwise material coming through from this fast emerging talent. It's deep, it's dark, it's deadly and more importantly it's different. Thank fuck for Amit, showing us it's time for things to change. Goldie you bastard; I can't believe you beat me to this one!

➲ Q Project - Voices - TBC

Quiff gives Sting street cred! This is massive for its mesmeric vocal breakdown. It works a treat without going too far or being too cheesy. I love it especially because it reminds me of an old KC Flight track Rider used to play over ten years ago, when I was a fully fledged hardcore raver. Rave on ya' bastards!

➲ Klute & Intalex - Make a Stand
Soul:r

For a change I decided to leave home without my trusty plug-in - ST Files - and enter the unknown world of production with Klute. All I can say is that it was a pleasant experience; A meeting of similar minds and the outcome is an energetic trip into the world of swirly stings and electric guitars. We're both happy with the result so that's good enuff for me. Hopefully there will be more from Klute and my goodself in the future.

➲ Calibre & Fats - Drop It Down
Signature

I was hoping not to have to mention my good friend Mr Martin for a change, but as everyone knows he makes a lot of great tunes. In my opinion without his contribution this scene would be well and truly up shit creek. 'Drop it Down' is a classic Calibre roll out. The old amen is in full swing, funked up in the max with a killa b-line and MC Fats singing along in his unmistakable fashion. Everyone is loving this tune and it's not hard to see why. Forthcoming on his own label sometime in the coming months.

BACK 2 BASICS RECORDINGS

RAIZIN' HELL SAMPLER 01
A) CAN YOU FEEL IT
AA) THE PORN TRACK (original)
B2B 12079
Released: 12th April

RAIZIN HELL' SAMPLER 02
A. THE PORN TRACK (Jb's xxx rmx)
AA. NO SLEEP
B2B 12079R
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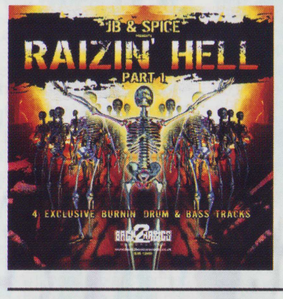

RAIZIN' HELL - VINYL PART 1
2 X 12" VINYL
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B2B 12080
Released: 10th May

RAIZIN' HELL - VINYL PART 2
2 X 12" VINYL
4 EXCLUSIVE TRACKS
B2B 12081
Released: 14th June

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drum and bass reviews

Edited by: Frenzic, DJ Epik, Shodan, Ben Holdtight, Mark OD, Guy Brickley.

9-10 classic. 8 killer. 5-7 it works. 3-4 filler. 1-2 ashtray

Illogic & Raf
Lemon D
Matrix
Klute

Calibre
Zen
Uncut
Potential Bad Boy

7 Blame - Sabretooth - Cairo - 720º Degrees

This is the second sampler from the forthcoming '720 Revolution LP'. 'Sabretooth' is a dark number with a dirty falling b-line, rabid beat rolls and old school stabs. 'Cairo' is on a funkier tip with a smooth bass line, a barrage of tight percussion and a chunky eastern riff that rolls throughout. Also check for Blame's 'Outer Zone'.

7 Fifth Element - Stone Cold mixes - Architecture

Following on from last years "Instinct", drum n bass collective, Fifth Element return with "Stone Cold" for Architecture. The crew consisting of Torment (Loxy), Marbles (Dj Ink), Midas, Keys & J-Dub blend gruff, hip hop lyrics with dirty underground beats to create a driving slice of aggresion. Perhaps surprisingly, Loxy & Ink's performance on the mic is as equally impressive as their abilities behind the decks and in the studio. The EP comes complete with a selection of remixes, a solid offering by BC UK, a hip hop reworking by DJ Crystl and a typically heavy, dark relick by Keaton.

7 DJ Spice - Porn Track (JBs xxx rmx) - Back 2 Basics

Spice's porn track gets the re-rub and its wetter than ever!! If your mum wasn't a fan of the original she isn't gonna enjoy hearing; "I deserve one f*ckin me hard and another cock in my mouth!", or ,"I'm a four finger whore" blasting out your bedroom! The tune sticks to the same bouncy, swinging style, and if you missed the original its worth the purchase. Dirty stuff!

6 Evol Intent - 7 Angels with 7 Plagues - Barcode

You know when a mission statement for a new label is "harder than Hardware" that the filth that's on its way is gonna be sickening! The guys that many are talking about come with their debut for Hardware offshoot, Barcode. 'Corrupt Cops remix' uses a hip hop sample well, and is pretty relentless. '7 Angels….' Is purely manic breaks and drops, with dirt style low frequencies.

8 Baron - Squelch / Dead List Five - Baron Inc

Baron kicks off 2004 with some more wobbly bass business. 'Squelch' uses a lot of the elements that made his 'Nosher' remix such a hit, with a heavy jump up beat laced with tidy loops and rolls. 'Dead List Five' is another bass heavy track, with rising wooshes and tidy beats. Definitely one of the better pieces of 'nu-school' jump-up around at the moment.

8 Klute - Gluesniffer (Hive & Echo rmx) - BBS

Man of the moment steps up to remix Klute's highly acclaimed 'Gluesniffer' and the yank does the original proud. Heavy kicks and snares keep this one firing on all cylinders. The tune drops heavily then falls down again to gradually build and do it all over again. This ones got the marks of a tight production all over it, and shows why the Violence head honcho is getting so much respect at the moment.

8 Matrix & Danny J - Telepathy / Domino - BC Presents

BC Present is a new subsidiary from the Bad Co lads used to showcase tracks from guest artists. They open with a strong release from a couple that need no introducing. 'Telepathy's' got a thick rolling bass line that climbs and falls nicely with beats that compliment and give the tune a good step. You'll recognise this one if you've heard it out cos it's got the classic house sample; "I got what you been looking for". 'Domino' on the b-side is a spacey, atmospheric piece with a quality break down that builds nicely into the drop, coupled with a delicate guitar rift that runs throughout. Definitely feeling both sides of this one, and you you can see why they've been in the game for a long time.

7 D Type - Just You / Madness - Beatz

More offerings from Dillinja with trademark basslines and heavy beats. 'Just You' is on a more chilled tip with funky bouncy highs and soulful male vocals. 'Madness' is heavy subs that only one man has truly got down to a fine art, and as usual on Beatz it's a more minimal offering than Valve/Test. One for the bass lovers.

8 BSE - Driving Insane Sampler - BSE Recordings

The Dutch trio have been building their reputation as solid producers for some time now, with help from Trace and his DSCI4 label who were quick to use their tracks. The sampler for the album is 'Boris The Blade' and a VIP of their heavy collaboration with Concord Dawn 'The Sun'. 'Boris…' is an atmospheric roller, that's a little less heavy than expected from BSE, but sticks to their sci-fi influenced style. 'The Sun VIP' smashes it with rolling beats, switching b-lines, rave stabs and a dosage of a trance influence that the lads are known for.

9 Trinity - Dune / Foxy Lady - Chronic

This one's been getting some serious action of the VIP of drum n bass, most notably Andy whose used this one as an intro a fair few times. Its got an epic intro lifted from the film 'Dune' and kicks in with wicked beats and a chunky deep bass line that flows and distorts nicely. 'Foxy Lady's' on a more funky tip, with some sneaky vintage riffs, and although it's a tidy little tune, it's all about the dutty a-side.

7 Total Science - Pop Psychology / Make Me Feel rmxs - CIA

D-Kay goes to work on the Total Science hit, chopping up the original chords and adding thick sub licks to give it a heavy/jumpy feel. It's a tidy remix that fans of the original should be feeling. Friction lays down heavy rolling percussion for the 'Make Me Feel' re-rub that moves along with high energy.

6 Klute - Growl / Lost Connection - Commercial Suicide

Klute's labels got a few realises in the pipe. 'Growl' hits heavy with razor breaks that don't let up. A modulated bass drives throughout. 'Lost Connection' goes on a more melodic vibe. Also check out realises from Silent Witness and Break.

8 Chris Su - Satisfy / Try Again - Critical

Critical are shaping up to be one of the most consistent labels around these days, coming through with more original and broad-minded music every time. 'Satisfy' is a tightly-constructed dancefloor gem, with elements of reggae, soul, house and a thunderous amen-backed b-line. Constantly building and progressing with some morphing analogue bass action, this track will be setting floors on fire without any shadow of a doubt. 'Try Again' is a more sultry roller, with a haunting male vocal and sweeping pads leading up to the pacey drop and Teebee-esque b-line. Also check for Phobia's 'Future Soul'.

8 Kemal & Dreden Codex - Glimpse of Truth - Cryptic Audio

'Glimpse Of Truth' is filled with eastern influences and majestic drum rolls that build over a long intro before tumbling into a driving array of bass tones and bongo rhythms. This is some genuinely mindblowing production, combining live samples and intensely complex rhythmics. Definitely a killer track to open any set with. Flip for a more conventional Kemal-style dancefloor workout complete with morphing b-line and subtle effects.

7 Leon Switch & Krytic Minds - Blue Print rmx - Defcom

There's a few new offerings from Defcom. Tech Itch is brought in for the 'Blue Print' remix that just hammers the amens with all sorts of different breaks flying left right and centre, and a twisted bass line to match. Another one for you heavy hitter fans. Also look out for 'I Remember/Black Rain' that's due from the label.

8 Carlito - Forward Motion / You're Special - Defunked

Keeping on that House influenced soulful vibe Defunked turns to long time producer Carlito, who's been producing uplifting melodic DnB since 1995. 'Forward Motion' hammers along with a relentless break, but it's the flip 'You're Special' which does the business. Uplifting female vocals run throughout over a stepping beat laced with bongos, luscious chord stabs, and a deep punchy b-line. Another one for the 'Swerve' headz.

8 Morphy - Bottoms Up - Direct Recordings

Next up from Kent based Direct Recordings we have a track from newcomer, Morphy entitled "Bottoms Up". Already being rinsed out by several big name DJs, this is definately a dancefloor smasher with it's tearing reeces, tight, busy beats and swirling atmospherics. Top notch.

8 Skynet / Rawthang - Code Orange - Discrete Recs

Its been a year since Skynet parted ways with long time producing partner Stakka, and things are looking bright. 'Code Orange' builds and bubbles nicely with rolling beats and good momentum, guaranteed to do damage on any floor. Rawthing's 'Chopper' hits the spot with a sweet build up licked with acidy samples. The break see's a heavy distorted b-line that rolls along perfectly with the subs underneath, and some nice percussive switches along the way. All good! Also check for Skynet's 'Elecrafunk'.

8 A.I. / Nos - Rise & Shine / Chameleon rmx - Dispatch

An impressive release for Dispatch as they enlist some of the scene's most innovative producers to take the reigns. 'Rise & Shine' is a Lil Louis-style roller with a sultry female vox sample and plenty of filters and minimal synths building and retreating throughout. Check the flip for an outstanding VIP mix of 'Chameleon' from Stress Level and TC1 chock full of old school surprises and interesting edits. Topped off with a simple, but hugely effective synth riff and a rumbling b-line this is one of the most original tracks I've heard for a while.

6 Ray Keith - Decade of Dread EP - Dread

It's been 10 years since Ray set up his hard hitting label Dread, and the releases are still rolling. 'The Missing Cuban' builds up slowly and drops with tough snares and ringing cowbells. 'Sunrise' uses a lush female loop, and runs that deep jungle vibe, with a swinging bass, that Dread is renowned for. 'Electric Piano' is a more eclectic piece, with an atmospheric piano riff running with amen's and bongo's. 'Hold On My Selector' is a kind of homage to Dread tune, with MC Navigator vocal cuts. Dread fans will rate this album, but there's nothing groundbreaking going on here.

8 SKC & Chris Su - Blister / Struggle - DSCI4

Some more heavy hitting business from Trace's label. 'Blaster' does what it says on the tin with a heavy drop into tearing amen's and a growling bass line, whilst 'Struggle' goes on a grimey stepping kind of vibe with some nice drops and edits. Well executed darkside sounds from DCSI4.

7 Phantasy & CD - Let Dem Ave It - Easy Records

Swiftly following on from the sucessful "Atomic Age / No Liars", Phantasy once again teams up with an MC, this time regular cohort, MC CD. The track opens with atmospherics, rare groove samples & twisted "Let Dem Ave It" vocal before dropping into punchy, amen laced beats and twisted bass with MC CD dropping his trademark "Let Dem Ave It" lyrics over the top. Flip for a vocal-less dub mix.

9 Ebony Dubsters - Number One / The Ritual - Ebony

Shy and T-Power's new alias returns with another dancefloor smasher that you won't have missed if you've been out recently. On a similar tip to the massive 'Ra' remix, that same heavy sub kicks in after a rapid break and "number one" sample, and shows how effective a simple bass pattern and big beat can be. Heavy stepping beats continue on the flip with a more bouncy number, but for me its all about the heavy a-side which gets the reload every time. Sick!

9 Ill Logic & Raf - Thinking Back - Come On - Ebony

Ebony look towards the duo that have built a solid reputation for writing soulful, intricate beats for a good time now. 'Thinking Back' moves along nicely with airy high hats, a lush diva sample, a big brass b-line and wicked use of strings and synth. 'Come On' is a little more down beat, with a thick slice of atmosphere and a deep bass line that sits nicely when the soft vocals slide back in. Both sides are strong, and it's no wonder that these two are catching the eye of the likes of Shy.

7 SS, Skibadee & Twisted - Deal with the Matter - Formation

When the likes of Formation head honcho, SS, Leicesters finest geezer bruv, Twisted Individual and one the scene's hottest MCs, Skibadee team up you would expect something special as the result. Well, this isn't quite it. A good solid dancefloor number which will definately get the crowds appreciation but nothing groundbreaking. Flip for a heavier dancefloor stomper with tight beats and pounding distorted basslines.

7 Generation Dub - Deliverance EP - Formation

Generation Dub get an EP all to themselves, and the result is a little disappointing. Sticking to the big bouncy basslines and stepping beats they are renowned for throughout the EP, and, although they execute this sound with precision, the 'Bodysnatchers rmx' is the only thing that really jumps out and grabs you. Look out for the dirtier 'Hawaii Five-0/Flute Thing' on their new imprint Propaganda Recordings.

6 Perfect Combination - Even Roll / Let it Go - Freeform

Two dancefloor number's on Freeform, with the a-side being the stronger half. 'Even Roll' flys along with tight rolling percussion and a stepping sub bass line that shifts up and down. Rising rave stabs sit nicely on top, but there's nothing that really jumps out about this track.

6 V/A - Sideshow Vol 1 EP - Freak Recordings

Dylan showcases the cream of his global contacts on Freak's debut EP. Representing the Stars and Stripes 'Ruff Rugged & Raw VIP' is militant and dangerous. The skit into hip-hop territory sounds fresh and the re-entry into drum and bass leaves you cold. From Down Under Pendulum offer 'Toxic Shock' which sounds like Hardware circa 1999 and is one of the weakest tracks I've heard from them. 'Batcave' by Keaton & Nitrox is a droney roller that never fulfills its potential and finally 'Lightcycles' by Cartridge is a pleasant surprise - an atmospheric intergalactic drum and bass ride, on a mid 90's amen vibe.

7 D Product & Surge - Bounce The Bass - Full Cycle

Things are looking good for the Bristol consortium as 2004 rolls in with some strong releases. 'Bounce The Bass' continues on the bass led funky tip that the Bristol boys do best, and the flip side's got a nice use of drum loops and kicks over an aquatic sub bass, with some old school samples.

6 Pollen & KC - Hellbender / Vodka & Codeine - G2

Pollen hooks up with fellow American KC on the catchy 'Hellbender', which jumps along with a sinister melody and stepping beat. 'Vodka and Codeine' is Pollen on his tod, and is the stronger side with a lot more energy and a stronger melody. Neither are outstanding tracks though.

8 Wrisk - From the gutters to the bars EP - Gain

Resonant Evil and long term producing partner to Mackie put out this EP on Gain. Showing Wrisk's versatility as he switches between the downright dirty in tunes like 'Dead End' then over to soft funk filled vibes in 'I Believe In'. This EP flexes a number of different styles and shows how each can influence the other. Also check for Dykast's 'Jeopardy'.

8 Potential Bad Boy - Play It, Kick It EP - Ganja

Hype gives the Bad Boy the platform to burst back on the scene, and Potential grabs it with both hands. The jungle influence is rife with fat deep basslines throughout. The title track, and 'Dem Talkin' are pure dance hall smashers, while 'Take Me Higher' goes on a more mellow deep vibe. The tune on the album for me is 'We Built This' with its soulful MC/singing in the build up and throughout, and its catchy jungle style riff. Old meets new with wicked effect.

7 Makoto - Joy (mixes) - Good Looking

Makoto teams up with new GLR female-vocalist Deeizm for this lush, soul-soaked groove. Excluding feelgood vibes with plenty of layered strings and rich horn licks, backed by some fluid beats and uplifting string hooks, 'Joy' lives up to its name. Deeizm proves that she has plenty of lyrical and vocal talent, and as Good Looking's first lady I look forward to hearing more. Altogether a nice little roller with enough spice to get the floor lively. Also check for Vice Versa's stunning 'Shining Through'.

7 Twisted Individual - Cannibal Lunch EP - Grid

Featuring MC Biggie on vocals, "Bus It Tonight" marks a distinct change in style for Leicester's best known cockney, Twisted Individual. Dub reggae sounds trip over intricate, busy, live sounding drums and heavy bass whilst Biggie does his thing and drives the track along. The title track, "Cannibal Lunch" is more like Twisted's usual output with b-movie film samples, tense intro and funky warbling bassline.

7 V/A - Hard Pressed EP #2 - Hard Pressed

The EZ Rollers new imprint launch their new Hard Pressed label with what looks like a mission to expose talented breakthrough artists. Junior Cartel's 'Fire Cracker' is a strong soulful roller, and is getting good airplay from the one like Fabio. Weva's 'Body Groove' is a well produced piece with a relentless groove and a strong funk element.

7 Rascal & Klone - Hoodwink - Heavy Rotation

Rascal & Klone take the reigns for the 7th release on Dj Friction's Heavy Rotation imprint. "Hoodwink" builds slowly with bubbling synths, dirty stabs, menacing filtered reeces and jingling percussion before the filters on the reece open up, sirens sound and track drops into a driving reece fest. Flip for a quirk techy roller.

8 Cyantific - Little Green Men / Quiet Star - Hospital

A label that keeps going from strength to strength, and its no wonder when you look at the talent they've got under their belt. 'Little Green Men' builds with a lush wailing vocal, and all the signs of another quality piece of liquid funk from Hospital, but launches into a barrage of layered breaks. The spinback samples that break the flow are well executed, and the use of vocals is sublime. 'Quiet Star' sticks to the ambient side of things with a weird recurring vocal. Also check for the live versions of 'Rewind' and 'Do You believe' due on 10".

7 Aquasky / Xample & Bane - Floor to Floor - Incident

Aquasky return with another adrenaline-fuelled outing. 'Floor to Floor' is a frenetic, house-tinged number that doesn't even give you time to breathe, led by a pulsating b-line and driving breaks and topped with a delicate vox sample. 'Influence' is another high-energy affair, filled with crisp beats, vocal snippets and some jazz-edged Rhodes chords. Its all about the pounding sub-bass on this one, punctuating the complexities nice and simply. A label that should always be on the shopping list.

6 David Carbone - Low Till I Smoke - Industry recs

David Carbone's had a long career in dance, bringing techno, house and acid to Oz in the Eighties. Now Bristol based he's focused on DnB, and Industry can't seem to get enough of him at the moment. Both tracks are on a pure liquid vibe, with thick melodies and funky chords and loops. 'Low Till I Smoke' features a nice vocal courtesy of Clari, that gives the tune soul and depth.

6 TKO - Rolf Harris / Terradome - Infrared

Infrared continue their onslaught with this 12" from newcomer TKO. Intense wobble-board bass action contrasts with the futuristic sonics and dischordant melodies on "Rolf Harris". Nice touches of echoing keys in the intro and outro sit well with the dancefloor-driven approach, adding plenty of depth to the production. "Terrordome" cuts between undulating bass frequencies and break edits without even giving you time to breathe.

9 Marky & XRS - Breeze / Backspin - Innerground

Another cut from the excellent 'In Rotation' LP with a little vinyl exclusive in the form of 'Backspin'. 'Breeze' features the vocals of the prolific Cleveland Watkiss and is an ethereal gem that reminds me of lying on a sun-drenched beach. Deftly produced and filled with Brazillian percussion and rich, reverberating chords and strings, this track is pure soul. 'Backspin' is pure dancefloor, soaked in that fresh and juicy energy that these boys do so well, led by a circling rhodes hook and a stepping b-line that sits perfectly under the amens.

7 Menacer - Omega Amen - Intasound

Bailey's Intasound continue the policy of releasing drum and bass that takes you back to early Metalheadz. 'Omega Amen' is a killer, Terrordrome synth stabs, punishing amens and tearout bass. Bring the pain! 'I Can't Take It' is mentally deranged and should be wearing a straight jacket, its like having a nightmare over and over again. Also check for the equally runnin' first release 'Redeemer'.

7 Greg Packer - Luv Dup / Hold on Tight - Interphase

The ever prolific aussie, Greg Packer is next up with two new tracks for Interphase. "Luv Dup" is laced with soulful house vibes, floaty pads, emotive vocals, housey bass and atmospheric fx. A steppy off-beat drum pattern adds a bit of spice. Flip for more soulful vibes dotted with disco-eqsue drum machine percussion.

7 Damage & Audio - Space Signal rmx - Invader

Audio and Mackie give Damage's 'Space Signal' the re-rub, and as you expect out of any of these three it's grime time! Deep subs and reece fly along with rattling percussion and some well timed stabs and drops. The b-side is another dirty tune with stop-start drum rolls, but it's all about the 'Space Signal' remix for me.

7 Chikinki - Like it or Leave It (Lemon D rmx) - Island

Pulling out the press release that comes with this tune I started thinking 'what the f*ck are they sending us this for!' Then I noticed there was a Lemon D remix on one side. It's a mad fusion of a British rock band and one of the UK's heavy bass masters. The intro lifts a guitar riff and vocals from the original then drops into the break for a heavy bass assault that you expect from the Valve don. Alongside dirty beats it makes this one sick.

8 Ikon - Vai E Kim - Jalapeno records

Ikon's Brazilian breaks tune gets the the re-rub from Nu:Tone who can't seem to put a foot wrong at the moment. Maintaining a lot of the original, the tune rolls along with intricate beats and drum loops. Pat Cerqueria's ambient vocals roll over the top and fit well with a lush deep bass. Definitely one for the Swerve crew.

6 NJC - Its You / Topaz - L Plates

New for Digital's L-Plates 'Its You' swings with funky guitar licks, stuttering percussion, a catchy vocal and ravey breakdown, it fails to ignite on the drop though and turns into an average roller. 'Topaz' is not very complex but the bassline is fun and feisty.

7 Unknown - Get Up / Incision - Lab

'Get Up's a nice deep vocal tune that sounds like it could be a Jill Scott bootleg, with a lush piano riff alongside a low stabbing bass line. The flips got old school flava with ravey piano riffs and a rollin b-line. Also look for the cheeky 'You've Got The Love' bootleg on its way on Lab.

8 Nu:Tone/Commix - Strictly Social / Autumn mxs - Liquid V

Marking the launch of V's exciting new imprint aiming at the liquid end of the market, Bryan G pulls out a couple of V Classics from Roni Size and DJ Die. Cambridge boy Nu:Tone gets down to basics with a nifty re-rub of "Strictly Social", adding some sweet string pads and beefing up that b-line with a little bongo-treatment. Commix keeps on impressing with his version of "Autumn" engulfing that unforgettable guitar riff in some heavenly rhodes and subtle horns. Truly stunning interpretations from two of the scene's brightest hopes… Long live Liquid V!

7 Lab Girl - Get Up / Incision - Lockdown

Newcomer "Lab Girl" presents two tracks for the Lockdown imprint. "Get Up" features some nice vocals throughout over tight rolling beats and stabby synth bass. The track is spiced up with some nice pianos and half-speed mid track breakdown. Also look out for Clipz's relick of Cybin's "Bad Dreams" forthcoming in the not too distant future.

8 Hazard - Angel Dust - London Republic

A heavy steppa from the True Playa, executed nicely on the versatile label. The grimey bass line hops up and down with a tough jump up beat. Hazard uses a quality female vocal that flows nicely over the mix especially its use in the break. Its got the man from Birmingham's stamp all over it, and it's definitely him at his best!

8 Champagne / Greenfly - Deep - Looking Good

'Deep' has been duly caned by Bukem and crew for quite some time now, and rightly so with its intoxicating plucked-bassline getting you right from the start. Newcomers Champagne create a groove that Roy Ayers would be proud of, oozing with filtered soul vocals and a crisp drum pattern. Greenfly continue their run of original releases with 'Electrofusion', propelled by a funk guitar hook, a simple chord pattern and some high-pitched synths.

7 Spirit - Solitaire / Soul Survivor - Metalheadz

As expected when Spirit meets Headz its gonna be dirty. 'Solitaire's' a bass driven tech step number, with militant low subs. If you buy a lot of Headz this one will be right up your street, but for me it hasn't got the pace to make it stand out from the crowd.

7 Danny C - Long Rd / Feel / Warheadz - Metalheadz

You know when you see a new Danny release on Headz that it ain't gonna be a liquid number! 'Long Road' is a good example of Danny at his best, heavy reece tearouts and an understanding of kicks and amens that a lot copy, but few can match. 'Feel' opens with a soft female lead, but soon switches. Bursting into a heavy falling bass alongside a rugged stepping beat that you don't always expect from Danny, and shows the talents that he has for making dancefloor orientated music. 'Warheadz 1 and 2' are more bouncy numbers that are ok but don't seem to hit the spot.

7 Leon Switch - Grit / Turnaround rmx - Mix N Blen

Kenny Ken's label brings in Leon Switch for something heavy. 'Grit' does what is says on the tin with a heavy minimal style, laced with rolling high hats and loops cut in strategically. 'Turnaround' uses a diva sample in the break then bursts into an onslaught of beats over a deep minimal bass, with the vocal kicking back in after a few bars. Also check for Xample's 'Beer Boy'.

7 Corrupt Souls - Wicked Life EP - Moving Shadow

Corrupt Souls formed when Washington based 'Impulse' and 'Telemetrik' joined forces, and have seen releases on Hardware and DSCI4 amongst others. 'Wicked life' sets the tone for this EP with deep growling bass, synth stabs, bongo rolls and a wicked "now's the f*ckin time!" sample on the break. 'Autoerotica' is a heavy steppa with a pace and progression that doesn't let up. Nothing revolutionary on this EP but some nice rough edged sounds that the US is starting to become synonymous with. Also check for the Future Prophecies EP forthcoming.

7 Kabuki - Bezerk / Pacemaker - Nerve

German producer Kabuki steps to Nerve with two differently styled offerings. 'Bezerk' is a techy roller that bubbles along nicely with a fat bass and will be appreciated by fans of the minimal techy sound. 'Pacemaker' for me is the standout track, with lashings of funk, crunching beats and a smooth deep b-line that gives the track a lot of depth and warmth. Also check for Fission's 'Pyramid.'

8 Humanoid - Tibetan Mist - New Vibe

This tune's been getting pulled back in Manchester and Liverpool for far too long but finally sees the light of day. If tunes were marked on how much they're loved by the general public this would score ten across the board. Produced by a Bristol mover and shaker in undercover mode 'Tibetan Mist' is a real roller with a haunting bass - simple yes, but its all about the vibe. Also check the equally runnin' 'Psycho' from Neurotix.

7 Raiden - Bare Knuckle Fight / Psycho - Outbreak

Fans of the Plymouth based Raiden will know exactly what to expect here but for those uninitiated: relentless driving drums and nasty dirty bass are the order of the day. As is often the case with this style of tune, the track starts serenely enough before dropping into dark filtered reeces and then erupting into break driven, filthy bass mayhem. Flip for the sedater, rolling "Psycho". Also watch out for Skitty's 'DNA'.

8 Serum - Vile / Bleak - Penny Black

Two years since it's last release, Ray Keith's Penny Black label return's with an artist that Ray commissioned after hearing tunes posted on his Dread website forum. Both sides are heavy hitters, but it's the a-side 'Vile' that gets my vote. 'Serum' edits and layers the amens intricately, stabs with deep subs and reece cuts to beef up the beat onslaught, and uses subtle whale cries to add atmosphere. Definitely one for tear-out fans.

7 Digital - Frontline (NJC rmx) - Phantom Audio

Nat Clarkson goes to work on 'Frontline' reworking it into a stuttering drum and bass skank, that chops and changes and booms bass in your face. The flip is more my style as Digital gets his nasty side out and drops a dirty dubwize riddim. Watch the bassline bashment and ominous vibe, its nasty!

7 Basic Operations - Quatum Leap - Phuturo

Rising producer Basic Operations touches down on Phuturo with heavy breaks and crunchy b lines. Both sides are big dirty tunes with acid licks and rave stabs running through. Not for the faint hearted!

7 Distorted Minds / Foxy - Revolution - PRO

After the massive 'Ouch' with Foxy, Distorted Minds step back in the studio with the award winning MC for round 2. More of the same from the Bristol duo, with two mixes on the same piece. The first mix is trademark DM with a fat distorted bass line and a familiar swing/jump up beat. The b-side sees Distorted's dabbling with heavier percussion, which is good to see, with a funky deep bass

drum and bass reviews

line which the Bristol scene is synonymous with. Foxy's trademark "Who want's a revolution?" runs nicely through.

8 Gridlok / Silver - Shallow / Pacemaker - Project 51

Hot on the heels of tracks on Cargo & Violence, Gridlok serves up a solo track, "Shallow" and a collaboration with Accidental Hero's Silver, "Pacemaker". Edgey, tense atmospherics kick off "Shallow" as tight beats filter up before dropping into an offbeat steppy roller with plenty going to keep you interested. "Pacemaker" features wailing guitars, skippy beats and a touch of funk.

9 V/A - Ram Raiders Vol 4 - RAM Records

You can trust the Ram stable to always come up trumps with the molten dancefloor beats and this latest installment of the Ram Raiders series is no exception. All killer no filler. 'Bass Fanatic' by Shimon & Sparfunk is an adrenaline rush of a tune, coming across with crisp beats, an electro twist and stomach-churning bass. 'Grudge Match' is a menace to society dropping a razor-sharp oldskool break and a vexed vibe. Fuck with this tune and you're going to end up in A&E. The 'Beastman remix' is one of my favorites of late with its horror strings, twisted tech-funk vibe and its rump-shaking bassline bounce.

8 Zen - After Party / Time Crisis - Reformed

Zen does the Formation camp proud with two heavy dancefloor killers! Both sides feature thick filtered bass alongside snappy beats, and it's the more grimey 'Time Crisis' that stands tallest with some taste bass shifts and synth riffs. No wonder it's been creeping into the like's of Grooverider's bag.

8 Insiders - Same Old Games / Reach Out - Renegade

More soulful funk from the softer side of the TOV. 'Same Old Games' has got a heartfelt soft vocal running through with a nice fusion of edgy samples and a mellow b-line. The drop into a half speed break works nicely and shows the talent behind this intricate duo. The flips nice, but it's the a-side that does it for me. Also look out for a Hold Tight release on it's way.

8 Stress Level & TC1 - Take Control - Renegade Recs

'Take Control's' getting good support from the likes of Bukem, Bryan Gee and Fabio amongst others, and deservedly so. This ones a nice groove licked roller with tough beats and hypnotic chords. All good!

7 Kryptik - 28 Days / New Encounters - Restless Natives

More heavy beats from the one like Kryptik. This is the first release from the Edinburgh label, and if this plate is anything to go by its gonna be a dark-side imprint. '28 days' is a deep down and nasty techy number, while the flip is a bit more bouncy combining a stepping beat with amen cuts and a switching bass line that keeps it moving and interesting.

8 Calibre - Pissed Up Raver / Cold Halo - Revolve:r

The third release from Soul:R's sister sees Calibre flexing a heavier sound than usual. 'Pissed Up Raver' combines deep subs with rapid breaks, sinister horns, and alongside the drunken sounding ramblings this bit's full of atmosphere. 'Cold Halo' sticks to a funkier vibe with a bouncier b-line and a nice hip-hop loop, alongside tight breaks.

7 Sonic & Silver - On The Waterfront - Science Fiction

Sonic & Silver deliver a slightly disappointing effort compared to the killer releases on Sonic's Space imprint. 'On The Waterfront' is driven by the pulsating b-line and some nice synth touches but didn't really do it for me. 'Magnetic' is the treasure on this 12" steeped in 95/96 Virus vibes with a relentless analogue bass cruising through the rough breaks. Gridlock is definitely the one to watch it seems, rapidly following in Hive's footsteps to make the US presence felt.

9 Jo - R-Type (Friction & Frenzic rmx) - Shogun Audio

It's always gonna be hard to review this one without bias! ATM top dog Frenzic hooked up with pal Friction with an idea to remix Jo's classic 'R-Type', and did the original proud. The remix keeps the distinctive computer game riff and sub line running through, with some heavier breaks layered to pack more of a punch for 2004. This'll be the first release on Friction's new Shogun Audio label, and with the original on the b-side this should be shifting enough units.

7 Midiman - Drop the Bass (D'sound & Bassline rmx) - Signal

The 6th release on the Signal imprint see's newcomer Midiman flexing out with tramens, squelchy bass, moody atmospherics, bleeps and "Drop the Bass" vocal sample. The flip features Derby's finest, Drumsound & Simon Bassline Smith on the remix tip. Their version is the stronger of the two with its dirty bass riffs and driving beats.

8 Nightwalker - Colombus / Mayhem - Signal

Nightwalker seems to be doing good at the moment with props from the True Playaz camp and Twisted securing a 12" for his Grid imprint. 'Colombus' is the stronger side with a heavy jump up vibe, on a bit of a Hazard tip. The break builds up, and it's a no holds barred ride when it breaks into a deep distorted bass riff. This ones gonna be lapped up by those of you feeling the new jump-up movement. Also watch out for S.M.O.K.E – 'Daroxx'.

9 Calibre - Mr Maverick / Highlander - Signature

We all know what to expect from Signature and this one again exceeds our expectations. "Mr Maverick" has been unaviodable on every DnB floor in the country over the past months, proving to follow in the footsteps of last year's "Signs" remix. Again taking some major dub influences and creating one of those b-lines that makes the jaws drop, Calibre rolls out another timeless anthem that will continue to be caned for long to come. "Highlander" is an equal pleasure for me, taking a rumbling amen and some staggered horns to create a full on dancefloor killa with some haunting synths bringing up the rear.

7 Sonic - Kashmiri Twist / Rusholme - Space

Sonic got a few releases lined up on his Space imprint, and his travelling influences are shining through. 'Rusholme's' a tidy roller with atmospheric wailing and a deep mellow bass that sits nicely with the use of brass work. Also look out for 'Bombay' that's getting props at the moment and 'Retrothruster' that's on its way.

7 Boylan - Everybody / Underground - Square One

BC Recordings sister label opens with a deep house influenced track, that rolls along nicely with a musical edge and breaks into more dancefloor orientated bass and beats. 'Underground' on the b-side is the one, combining a rumbling Ed & Optical style b-line lashed with strings and house diva vocal snippets. The second break builds up with the vocal and rising bass kick before it unleashes again. With this and the Danny J and Matrix offering 2004's shaping up to be a good year for BC UK.

7 Aquasky / Xample & Sol - Right Here - Sonix

'Right Here!' is quite a surprise for Aquasky fans, with a lot more bounce than you'd expect from the Bournemouth crew. Aquasky seem to jump on a certain bandwagon with the bouncy distorted bass and a catchy hook used on this one. It's the flip which gets the props with a deep dirty bass roller that should get any floor going.

8 Orion - Time Stands Still / (Teebee rmx) - Subtitles

Orion lays a trancey female vocal over a fat dubby b-line and tight breaks, keeping on a rolling atmospheric tip. The Norwegian gives the track a trademark tech-step stamp, keeping most of the vocals intact, and breaking into more rapid beats nicely. Both sides are tightly produced and deserve a look at. Also look out for Teebee's 'Human Reptile' remix that's forthcoming on Subtitles.

6 Tek / Jayco - The Year 2000 (Red rmx) - Sudden Def

Sudden Def kick off 2004 with a DJ Tek remix courtesy of DJ Red. Nothing new here but a nice techy roller with a deep b-line that rolls up through-out. Not a standout track but enough to keep the floor moving, and a good track to bridge between a couple of heavy hitters. Jayco's 'Burn Out' continues on a similar hard tech tip with a distorted brass sounding bass and edgy beats. Also check for K-Step's 'Velvet Lounge'.

8 Skyver & DJon - Justice / Face Down - Technique

Technique Recordings new signings continue the Australian invasion. The intro sets the mood as whale noises give it an ocean-deep darkside vibe. The breakdown disorientates like a bottle of absinthe as they drop a frenzy of bassline and amen edits that pump up the atmosphere to melting point. 'Face Down' is a head fuck of a tune and is only for sicko's.

8 Capone - Just Relax / Neck Back - Test

You know what to expect when you see a new Dillinja bit in your shop, and 'Just Relax' doesn't fail to provide. I dunno how the name got given to this tune cos it's a heavy hitter that tears right through you. The drums tear out and the bass line is as deep and heavy as I gets. 'Neck Back' combines soft vocals over a dirty big bass line than fluctuates nicely. There's some dirty stabs and a nice rewind touch half way through. Dillinja doing what he does best.

7 K.O.T.P - So Far / Get Down - Transfer Recs

K.O.T.P takes us on a dancefloor tip with the a-side 'So Far'. A twisted acidic sample sits over a subtle rolling bass line that's complemented by strong kicks and snare rolls. 'So Far' moves along nicely but lacks a bit of variety. The other side continues on the same but with more of stepping vibe to it.

8 Audio - Brundle Fly / Jungle Demon - Triple Six

With a name like 'Brundle Fly' you know where the sample's are gonna come from. Triple Six's first release brings in one third of Resonant Evil, Audio. 'Brundle Fly' has one aim, to smash dancefloors', and it achieves it with flying colours. The chunky bass line shifts up and down, and sits perfectly alongside the hard jump-up beat. The flip is on a similar tip but with heavy sub licks and a twisting reece. Definately one to get the crowd jumping.

9 V/A - Extended Playaz EP - True Playaz

True Playaz line a couple of EP's with some tracks that have been getting smashed on dubplate recently. Friction and Nu Balance return to the label with the bouncy steppa 'Bogeyman' that's been getting caned by a fair few recently. Hazard's 'Imagination' shifts along nicely with trademark heavy bass and jump beats. Hive makes his first appearance on the legendary imprint with a sublime track. Epic strings climb up and down alongside tinkering piano notes that give this piece a deep melodic groove. The EP finishes with a new bit from jungle don: Potential Bad Boy, with a heavy sub licked slice of jump up. This one's a sick album!

7 Concord Dawn - Uprising EP - Uprising Records

The NZ double act come with a new EP, and after their massive 'Tell Me' they kick off with a bouncy MC led number 'Get Ready' featuring Scribe, with a melody that reminds of High Contrasts 'Basement Track'. 'Horror Show' features some vicious rave stabs, and a trademark heavy drop, whilst 'Let it Go' has a potent female vocal over the top. A good album, but some CD fans will be put off by the lean towards the bouncier side of drum and bass that they adopt on this piece.

8 Muffler - Pain / Warmonger - Urban Takeover

Muffler's got a couple of realises lined up for Takeover, and its this plate that does the damage. 'Pain' combines an epic atmospheric build up before a heavy percussion kicks in with Dillinja style sub lines. The flip breaks with a quality Al Pacino 'Skarface' sample, and keeps on the grimey dancefloor tip that the a-side runs on. Also look out for Muffler's 'Invasion' and Timebomb'.

8 Nicol & Majistrate - Pink Shirt Poofter - Urban Takeover

Urban takeover have a whole heap of singles ready to drop and for me this is the pick of the bunch with it's crisp stomping beats, searing basslines and "This One Real Dutty" vocal sample. Also Look out for tracks from Muffler, Devise & 3A and an EP featuring Tungsten & Morph, Filter and more.

9 Roni Size - Bumbakita / Fassy Ole - V Recordings

Size returns to the legendary V and what more could Bryan ask for than this sick plate?! After a long break from the label that released his first tune Roni returns with one of his greatest tunes to date. 'Bumbakita' uses a catchy ethnic sample over a deep warped bass that Roni's renowned for. The track is brimming with funk but still a full on dancefloor smasher. 'Fassy Ole' is classic Roni with a deep and dirty b-line next to crisp jump up beat. Along with the launch of Liquid V it's looking like 2004's gonna be a good year for one of jungles greatest labels.

6 Gridlok & Echo - Structure / Rock Look - Violence

Gridlock and Echo team up on Hive's imprint with 'Structure'. There's some nice touches, like the trumpet riff that falls in and out, and some nice bass stabs, but overall it's a bit dis-jointed and seems a bit untidy at points. Echo solo's the b-side 'Rock Look' with a heavy roller that hits hard.

8 J Majik & Wickerman - Fleshwound - Viper Recs

The second release on Futurebound's Viper label continues the prolific run of tracks from Infrared stalwarts, J Majik & Wickerman. "Fleshwound" starts with warped, twisted strings and thumping kick drums before dropping into a simple but highly effective synth bassline and energy laben drums dotted with reeces and airey effects. The flip see Cookie Monsters serve up a tightly produced roller in the form of "Roadrunner".

8 Uncut - Chinese Silk (mxs) - Wired

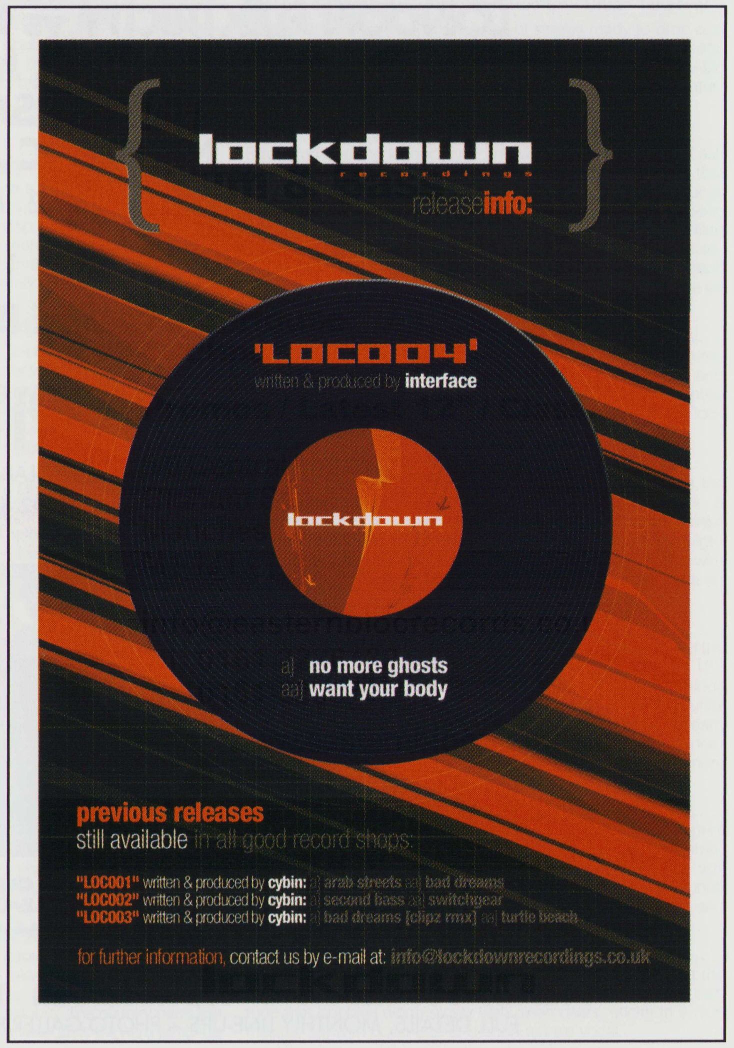
Returning to their own imprint for this 12" Uncut have enlisted the help of fellow Manchester resident, Calibre on this quality 12". Chopping up Jenna G's soulful vocals to create another melody altogether, Calibre works his magic on this one adding beautiful keys and pads, combined with a bassline that will melt any heart. Future Cut take on the duties on the flip, providing a more dancefloor-friendly mix complete with tough, live-drum edits and more of the original vocals.

7 2DB - Musical / Punch Drunk - Worldwide Audio

Drumsound & Bassline touch down on their Worldwide imprint with a couple of dancefloor bubblers. Simon must have delved into his rave archives to dig out the 'Music's So Wonderful' vox and the boys twin it with an infectious wonky bassline. 'Punch Drunk' has a more hectic feel to it, scatty beats, tearout and jump-up bassline.

6 Locomotion - Zero / 2 Feet Deep - Zoo

'Zero's' a vocal led roller that flows nicely, but I'm not feeling the vocals too much on this track. '2 Feet Deep' is a nice ambient tune that bubbles along nicely with clean beats, sticks to a nice musical tip, with good use of a short female vocal.



game reviews

Compiled by: Ben Holdtight & Carl Suspects

NEWS

Pro Evolution X on the X-Box
Now everybody knows that Pro Evolution is the footie game; there is admittedly always some mug who thinks FIFA is better, usually because they've got an X_box and can't get Pro Evo. That is until Christmas when Pro Evolution will be released on both PS2 and X-Box; and to top it all, apparently it will be online! So all those X-Box live heads who are feeling football, you'd best start wetting your pants now, cos this is gonna be sick!

X-Box 2004
Microsoft's domination continues; as if the whole online content wasn't enough to hurt the Playstation, it's looking likely that Grand Theft Auto 5 will be on a simultaneous (or near enough) release for the X-Box. Leaving little incentive to have a PS2; let alone if you consider Pro Evo X, Top Spin 2, Driver 3, and of course the much awaited Halo 2, which should be out very soon.

PS X
Just as you thought Sony were gonna let the Yanks fly through like its Baghdad; blam! the Jap's have hit back with the PSX. Old news for the Japanese, this fabled machine is apparently due to hit European shores this Summer. If you haven't already heard the word, the PSX is a combo of a 250gb hard drive with a DVD recorder/player, cd player, and PS2 built in with internet compatibility as well as USB 2.0 sockets as well as a host of other functions which are slightly unclear; although you should be able to use this as a hard disc recorder for you to record your favourite telly programmes. It's quite a package; but will it catch on …

REVIEWS

Legacy of Kain: Defiance - X-Box
If you're tired of games where you always have to do the right thing for the side of good, this one is for you, as you take on the role of a proper evil vampire geezer. You can suck blood, steal soul's, float, turn in to bats and get milli with a sword . . sounds good innit. Legacy of Kain: Defiance is basically a role-play/slash em up 3D adventure where you have to complete a number of puzzle and dexterity type challenges whilst chopping up and blood sucking many a enemy. It plays quite while, despite the initially confusing camera angel and frequent cinematic interludes, and is actually quite absorbing. I haven't completed it yet and it does seem to be reasonably long; however its so long you do seem to lose track of the storyline a bit. This is probably worth the money if you're up for going in on a long one-player mission; it's not particularly groundbreaking but this is definitely very playable.
Darkness: 9/10
Sampleability: 8/10 (pads and screams aplenty)
Playability: 8/10
Overall: 8/10

NHL Rivals 2004 - X-Box
This is a solid game; Ice Hockey is not really my thing and I presume this one is more for our louder cousins across the Atlantic, but this is still a good'un. The graphics on this are pretty killer; as with all the games in the XSN series, they are very smooth and easy on the eye. I don't fully understand Ice Hockey but the game seemed very playable if you were into it; and it is also on-line enabled so you can play with your mates on X-Box Live. The only problem I found was its proper hard to score goals, so I mainly focused the next best thing any good sportsmen would do . . start a fight; yes that right there is quite a good punch-up feature when tempers get a little flared. Overall; if you're an Ice Hockey fan I suggest you definitely need to go in on this one, otherwise leave it alone.
Darkness: 1/10
Sampleability: 0/10
Playability 7/10
Overall 7/10 (more if you're a Ice Hockey Fan)

THUG (Tony Hawks Undergound) – X-Box
We all know about the Tony Hawk's series; it's basically the skateboarding game, with its addictive trick combo format. THUG has changed up the format a bit which basically has added a storyline and some extra dimensions to the basic trick combo format. And you can get of your board and walk around, climb buildings and stuff; but it basically is a similar format just in more of a mission-orientated style. The controls are basically the same, although it is a bit more difficult and the added features of being able to grab the back of cars Back To The Future style and climb buildings to jump off make a big difference. This game is basically well playable and if you're into skateboarding this is a must; if your not its still worth having but its not killer.
Darkness: 2/10
Sampleability: 1/10
Playability: 8/10
Overall: 8/10

ESPN NBA Basketball – X-Box
Hoop, there it is... I'll slam this muthafucka down on you bitch. Unfortunately trash talking is not part of this basketball sim; but its got pretty much everything else, dunks, play-calling, 'iso-motion' dribbling, 1 on 1, full NBA season, replays, commentary stats, etc. Although very tricky to master, I think this is probably one of the best basketball games out there, as it is very playable and a very thorough and accurate representation of basketball. I suspect though if you are not really a basketball fan you will not find it anywhere near as good or as entertaining. For instance to be successful in an NBA season you have to run plays quite strategically and make careful choices about when to bust some skills and when to post up or shoot from the outside. Overall this an excellent game with numerous different features and types of game; but maybe a little too specialist for your average gamer.
Darkenss; 0/10
Sampleability: 0/10
Playability: 7/10
Overall: 8/10

Pitfall Harry - X Box
For those of you getting too old to admit that you still play computer games the name Pitfall will bring back a warm sentimental feelin inside going back to the days of 4 colour games and 20 minute loading times. This is an updated version of the old Pitfall, but unfortunately its probably more for your kid brother. This one is an all action platformer for the next generation; lots of 3d exploration, mini puzzles and challenges to pass in the classic tradition of platform games. It plays very smooth, and looks good, if a little cartoony; as much as I hate to admit it this one did hold my attention for a while and draws you in to just trying to complete one more task. Not really one for anyone over the age of 12 but a good game all the same; and it does bring back a few memories of the good old days.
Sampleability 0/10
Darkness 0/10
Playability 7/10
Overall 7/10

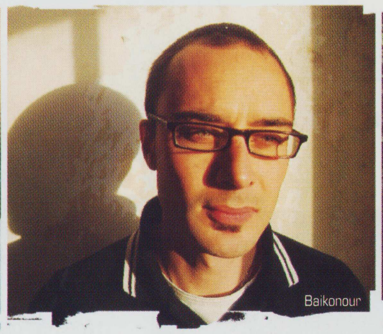
THE ATM TOP 5 GAMES

1. **Rainbow Six 3** – heavyweight online warfare and speech recognition... Bo!
2. **Project Gotham 2** – online racing is amazing; unlock the TVR Tuscan for real speed.
3. **Pro Evolution Soccer 3** – best football game ever; we just can't put it down.
4. **Halo** – recently reborn with some 16 player system link action, absolutely killer.
5. **GTA: Vice City** – recently ported across to X-box has given this ripper a new life.

blunted beat reviews

compiled by SOTO & Kingsley Marshall

TY


Baikonour

Bronze Age Fox

Bussetti

Breaks

Baitercell/Schumacher-What's Down Low?-Passenger

As you'd expect from a Passenger record this is pretty full on. There's a definite 'Euro' feel to the tracks, which is probably because the composers come from, erm, NZ.(Well, the climate's kind of similar!) Deep and dirty rumbling bass drives the track along with the almost pop-trance vocal actually working pretty well over the top. The B-side is the stand out here, due to it's tougher, crunchier drums that give the track a bit more attitude. (4/5) SOTO

Mutiny vs Baitercell & Schumacher - Test Press RIP / Inchie vs Merfie - Rowdy Time - Funkatech

Hypnotic percussion, nicely programmed drums, ravey stabs, deep driving bass, aggressive vocals, floating strings and an infectious synth riff- it's all here! Flip for shameless party vibes, carnival flavour and an uncompromising attitude with a mix of cheeky trumpets, jangly guitars, tough beats, filtered leads and heavy bass. Quality 'urban' breakbeat with a tough edge. (3.5/5) SOTO

Clone - Dreambreaks - Resin

Resin keep 'em coming, this time it's little different for the label, giving the dub stylings a rest and lettin in some other sounds. There's a bit of asian influence, which is then replaced by some light techno synth action. The original kind of meanders through different evocative soundscapes over a tight low-down groove. The title is definitely right here! The remix goes for a tougher approach and focusses more on one area and gets into a rhythm, better for the dancefloor. Another interesting record for the rising Resin. (4/5) SOTO

Scrappy - Off the Lead / Nuclear Dub - Doghouse

The A Side is a charming little peice of tweaked skank. Nicely stoned with a touch of trippiness that rolls along without a care in the world, slowly but surely embedding itself into your mind. Sonically warm and just the right amounts of dub with a small, but still satisfying side dish of noodles. Flip over for an altogether different balance. The rolling dub elements are still in place but the noodle quotient has increased. Off kilter tuning and delays push the percussion all over the place and this provides another interesting element to let your mind wonder even further. (4/5) SOTO

Aquasky vs M.blaster - Seville / Fairlite rmxs - Shadow Cryptic

The relentless torrent of tracks that flows out of the Aquasky studio continues. Here we have the almost trancey 4/4 excursion that is 'Seville'. They've always had an underlying techno feel to a lot of their tracks so it's no surprise hearing this. 'Fairlite' takes the threesome back to their roots with some peak time vocals and nostalgic pianos, before dropping nicely into familiar rolling Aquasky bass driven territory. There's a remix single as well, with DeeKline sticking his oar in and turning in a typically firing re-rub. Our fave is the General Midi mix, delivering what you'd expect from one of the most solid performers around. (4/5) SOTO

Shpongle - Dorset Perception / Beija Flor - Twisted

The A-side has been getting loads of attention all across the board, from breaks to house to progressive types. The '...Balearic Breaks...' name of the remix kind of gives the game away. It does exactly what it says on the tin. All Latin guitars and dreamy, Mediteranean vocals and a big, bouncing bender of a bassline. It's pretty good in a summery way, but we prefer the B-side. There's a touch more attitude in there and some really interesting out-of-tune business going on that sounds quite unique. More guitars and vocals as well, which is nice! A natural, warm record with some welcome quirky twists. (4/5 SOTO)

Los Paranoias - Queen B - Faith & Hope

The fourth single from the hosts of Brighton's All Time Top 100 boozy bar session, and some time sombrero wearing breaks mariachis ride into town with all guns blazing, the windswept and interesting Queen B kicking up dust amongst the rustle of guiros and Morriconic flourishes of guitar before a vicious bassline lays the groove to rest. The longplayer If Destroyed Still True is due later in the spring. (KM)

Chris Carter - Apply The Breaks - Botchit & Scarper

Chris kicks off his first mix for Botchit with own remix of Jason Sparks' - 'I'm In U' - a seriously funky tech edged piece of vocal climaxing breaks, which sets the scene for a mix from one of the most consistent performers on the scene. Atomic Hooligan's squelchy '6 am Beigel' and the classic soulful house / breaks cross over '4x4x4' from Deekline make appearances. The mix takes in all the sights and sounds as it passes through electro lady (and boy!) land care of SOTO's guitar driven 80's electro 'Hootenanny'. Newcomer JHz keeps the pace up with his own brand of precision engineered breaks and brooding bass lines, which leads us nicely on to Backdraft (Botchit's tough friends from up North), Sicknote and the mighty Aquasky Vs MasterBlaster. Basically you've got all the Botchit roster and more in a mix that makes you realize what a lot of quality music emanates from that little office in east London!

Hybrid - Higher than a Skyscraper - Distinctive

There's something slightly disturbing about Peter Hook's involvement in Hybrid's highly camp acid squelcher which first appeared on Morning Sci Fi. These remixes only add to the innuendo, with the ridiculously monikered Twitch and Sweat emerging from the speakers with a mix that minces like Mrs Slocombe on heels. Still, there's a cracking mix from The Orb on the flip to soothe the soul. (KM)

Sixtoo - Box Cutter Emporium - Ninja Tune

Sixtoo continues to explore the hip hop hinterlands in the menacing pimp roll of 'Box Cutter,' but it is the frankly bonkers b-side 'Storm Clouds and Silver Linings,' which will interest those who like a little more flavour to their breakbeat sets, making a true return to the source in it's employment of Can's Damo Suzuki for a sprawling tribute to Kraut Rock. Frightening. (KM)

Sista Widey - Inspekta - Ori(jah)nal

A slab of genius from the Smugg Brothers, allowing contemporary producers to rough up some reggae with little regard for the genre or original work. Jamie 'Jimpster' Odell providing the highlight on this limited white, turning over the good sister through the abundant use of blips, bleeps and a thunderous bass which rattles under a break which will be well known to hardcore heroes. Watch for work from Tom Middleton, Palmskin, Mr Dan and Horace Andy in the near future. (KM)

Kabuki - Fat Lizard - Combination

Combination follow Fat Cat and Planet Mu in their presentation of mismatched beats on split singles, in a new series of sonic sevens. As Kabuki hook sup with Fat Jon in the first offering from his Signal to Noise album, so Christopher Just throws down the 303 squelching, foot shuffling title track from his Jeans and Electronic originally release back in 1996. (KM)

Leftfield

Clouddead - Dead Dogs Two - Mush

West Coast triumvirate Clouddead owe more to Brian Wilson and Can than the usual guns, women and drug obsessed panto thugs, who continue to dominate the hip-hop game. Indeed, this latest issue of their cross-pollinated manifesto only adds to the feeling that with just a little more marketing juice from Mush and these twenty first century de la dogs would destroy all that challenged them in a battle of beats, rhymes and life. (KM)

Half Cousin - Country Cassette - Gronland

The twice-removed tinkerers of folktronica step to the plate with a singer beamed in from golden era Stone Roses, some percussive plumbing, a guitarist who rattles and rolls like Santana on acid, and a bassline which clatters around the sampler like a marble on a ski slope. Turn over for something less twisted, with a gentle ode to that standard issue of both road worker and stadium steward - the Fluorescent Jacket. (KM)

Ty - Oh, you want more? - Big Dada

Ty and Roots go global in a dextrous bassbin blowout that refixes a cut lifted from last years Upwards. If the merry-go-round squawks of the original didn't appeal, then perhaps this new take will be more suited to the speakers – turfing out the carnival in favour of more eastern flavours, where all manner of tabla thumps and muezzin calls twist around towering lyrical minarets and snake-hipped pulses of analogue bass. (KM)

Ratatat - Seventeen Years - Audio Dregs

Eric Mast briefly rewrites the manifesto of his Oregon label best known, catching the distortion peddle for some brutal, block rocking g-funk loaded with rabbit punches of ghetto bass and an unrelenting bass kick. Followers of the label shouldn't stray too far from this single however, as the ghetto fabulous soon subsides into the slightly more cerebral 'Spanish Armada.' (KM)

Funkstorung - Fat Camp Feva - K7!

Pioneers of the splintered sound, Michael Fakesch and Chris De Luca turn out a fine pair of cuts in preparation of their second highly anticipated full length for K7, Disconnected. Whilst the mainplay ticking all the expected glitch and twitch boxes, the farside explores territory previously unchartered by the Munich duo, with a surprisingly accessible slice of modern urban blues vocalled by Enik and Tes. (KM)

Bussetti - The Itch - Kudos

London's Bussetti offer an accomplished sure shot, where Jana Hermon vocal slowly unravels over spine tingling string arrangements, as Nick Atkins attempting to rescue our heroine through firing out hopeful brass lines in an attempt to quell this soaring orchestration. Flip for a macabre blend of drum and bass, hip-hop and claustrophobic kung fu cinematica. (KM)

Baikonour - Milk EP - Melodic

Melodic's spookiest sound sculpture gets the remix treatment from four very different artistes. As Amon Tobin slices at 'Coca Sun' with his Akai Stanley and Imitation Electric Piano fire up their harpsichord, so label mate Gavouna flicks his machines to A.I.-era B12 for a take where a multitude of synthetic layers crackling with synthetic simplicity. Topo Gigio takes both biscuit and tin however, in his recordings of the omniscient cries of strung out angels. Heavenly. (KM)

Bronze Age Fox - Forty Four - Bagatelle

The hotly tipped Bristol 4 piece follow 'Dinosaur' with the second episode in their trilogy of shapely singles. A twiddle of the tempo mid-way through the brass drenched cheeriness of 'Instrumental' turns Badly Drawn shapes into unforgettable foxtrot pop, but it is 'Forty Four' which steals the show, lashing whip cracking mariachi's to a tirade of post-modern cultural commentary. (KM)

Skapel - 1958 - Ninja Tune

More worldly beats from the utterers of zen, this time hitting Poland for a two piece hit of big keys and even bigger beats of '1958,' before dimming the lights for the bluesy film-noir sleaze of 'Low.' Chunky funk money Quantic also makes an appearance, filling the speakers with some finely tuned Afrobeat fettling. (KM)

Minus 8 - White EP - Compost

Downtempo labels come and go, but Compost's star sees no sign of abatement. This latest signal demands we fire up the dancehall beat signal with a sure fire crossover smash which employs some time Straight Ahead stalwart Tweak to ignore the polite shuffle of 'White,' in favour of turning out a low key beauty which shakes up the spirituals of Master at Work vocalist Billie with a glacially subtle, motor city groove. (KM)

Zero 7 - Home - Ultimate Dilemma

Quite who was responsible for appointing Massive Attack-lite chancer Ben Watt as one to watch escapes us, with the workaday ambience of his latest remix gasping like a fish out of water, when confronted to the blink-and-you miss-it beatshifts of Stereolab's take on this choice cut from Zero's forthcoming sophomore longplayer. Drifting effortlessly from lino squeaking electro to glittering post-techno, before collapsing in a heap of Reichian soundtrack excellence. (KM)

Victor Malloy - Lions & Tigers & Bears EP - Inertia

Inertia's pipe-smoking Parisian isn't the most prolific of characters, with three years separating his debut Musings from this latest full-length effort. The mysterious Malloy hasn't been dragging his heels during this time however, with this latest record employing vocalist Kenny McCracken to dispense spine tingling tales of love lost over a uniquely soulful, though slightly melancholic, millennial shuffle, where outspoken orchestration makes shapes to jazz, swing, and funk pendectia. (KM)

Basil Kirchin - Charcoal Sketches - Trunk

Jonny Trunk strikes again with another record collection devaluing issue of previously hard to find sounds. Kirchin is again the focus, following the superfly Quantum with more delightful sounds from his early seventies opus worlds within worlds. Like it's aforementioned predecessor and the soon-come State of Mind recording, though experimental, crammed with found sounds and free form digressions, Kirchin attained near mythical status on the back of his sheer weightiness of sound, forever reigning in his collaborators for one sprawling pleasure trip. (KM)

hip hop reviews

compiled by sireman

DJ Format

Vast Aire

Madvillan

Encore

DJ Format – A Right Earful (Various Artists) - Antidote

Format's first release "Music For The Mature B-Boy" cemented this Brighton based loop digga as one of the UK's most sort after DJ acts. Touring alongside DJ Shadow, Ugly Duckling and the like he has built a large following here and abroad with his mix of funk & Jazz breaks fused with hip hop. With this latest offering though he has opted to take us on a journey through the late 80's & 90's Hip-Hop sound. The artists under the spotlight include Black Sheep, The Alkaholiks, Kurious and The Pharcyde, there are literally too many to name check everyone. It's a good and comprehensive mix of classic tunes and Format hasn't really gone for the obvious tracks on this album which makes for an interesting stroll down record lane if you will. It's also mixed all the way through so you get that real mix tape vibe from it, although the production on this is of a much higher standard compared to the tapes I used to listen to. This is a must for all of those out there who are a little older than they like to think and great for the young amongst us to brush up on a small dose of Hip Hop history. If you're looking for a right earful of class tunes then you needn't look any further this because it delivers exactly that….

Swollen Members – Heavy - Battle Axe Records

The content of this album is what you would expect from such a heavyweight crew. Well produced up tempo beats which will be great for filling the floors out in the clubs, lyrically Madchild, Moka Only and Prevail stick to what they do best and that is delivering some venomous flows and verses while also diversifying the deliveries with harmonies and melodies. All in all this is a great album, which should appeal to everyone's taste from fans old and new. Also none other than Spawn creator Todd Macfarlane designed the artwork so you get the feeling of a well-presented and complete package here. Undoubtedly Swollen Members are back again to reek havoc upon our speakers once more so be sure not to miss out on this as it lives up to its name, this is Heavy.

RJD2 – Since we last spoke - Def Jux Records

It doesn't seem that long ago that RJD2 was receiving critical acclaim for his debut album Deadringer, well he's now set to do the same thing again with this new LP. The first thing that grabs you is the intenseness of the beats. RJD2 has definitely been digging in the crates and working hard to produce some fine quality music for our ears to digest. The overall sound of the album is a creative mix of instrumental beats that deliver something that has a real sense of substance. The tracks flow together almost seamlessly which gives you the feeling that he has also spent time on arranging the album and this makes it keep your attention from start to finish. If you're a fan already then this will live up to your expectations for sure, if you aren't yet aquatinted with this man of the mixing desk/turntables there is no better place to start than with this album.

Skitz – Homegrown Vol: 1 (Various Artists) - React Music

Looking for some quality UK Hip-Hop? Well Skitz is the man to supply you and he does just that with the release of this top notch mix CD of homegrown talent. Some of the UK's finest Mc's are featured ranging from the likes of Jehst, TY, Taskforce and Skibadee who all make their presence felt on some outstanding tunes. Also featured are guest appearances from Pharoh Monach and Kardinal Official who supply the across seas connections. The compilation itself is a rugged mix of tunes with a good variation of well produced beats and heavyweight Mc's which will have you reaching for the rewind button after the first listen. Although not all the material on the album is hot off the vinyl press there's definitely a large percentage of exclusive tracks so it doesn't lack in fresh content. A quality compilation which is well thought-out and doesn't let up pace from start to finish.

Vast Aire - Look Mom… No Hands - Chocolate Ind

Vast Aire has done nothing but smash everything they he has touched since the release of the debut album The Cold Vein with accomplice in rhyme Vordul. He now presents us with his debut solo album that is nothing short of a masterpiece. With production from the likes of Madlib, RJD2, Da Beatminerz and guest Mc appearances from the likes of Sadat X (Brand Nubian), Mf Doom and Aesop Rock to name but a few. So what can you expect to hear from this album? Well if you are unfamiliar with this Mc be prepared for some banging tunes with a gritty and honest lyrical content. The beats are interesting and varied due to the wide range of producers who feature on the album. Although this might not be to everyone's taste I'm convinced if you gave it a spin down at your local music emporium you would be adding it to your crate quick sharpish!

Madvillain - Madvillany - Stones Throw / Pias Recs

Here is a collaboration of probably the 2 most self styled artists to grace the mic/mixing desk in this realm known as Hip-Hop. In one corner we have Madlib, in the other we have MF Doom resulting in MADVILLIAN. It follows on from the team-up last year of Jay Dilla and Madlib under the name of Jaylib. People will also be familiar with Madlib from The Loot Pack and Quasimoto. The same pattern emerges for MF Doom who was originally known as Zev Love X (KMD) and has also appeared in the persona's of Viktor Vaughn and King Geedorah. The album itself is some well produced thought out and lyrically impacting music. There is something for everyone from laid back tunes to straight up speaker smasher's all done in a very unique style and laiden with tv and film samples which makes for humorous listening. Take my word for it, there is verbal villainy that lurks within the vinyl grooves of this soon to be classic album…

Encore – Layover - Hiero Imperium

Encore's first appearance was alongside the late legendary wordsmith Charizma and world-renowned DJ/Producer P-Nut Butter Wolf way before the days of the Stones Throw record label. To cut a long story short let's just say that he's worked with a whole bunch of people ranging from Dan the Automator through to The Hieroglyphics. The title track Layover is a great place to start with this new album, it's a proper head nodder of a tune that sets the standard for the rest of the LP. Encore once again doesn't fail to impress with his lyrical fluidity. There's a good mix of tunes on this latest offering which makes for good listening. Although it's not a ground breaking new sound it's definitely a good one with a nice variation in content. The production is crisp and Encore is honest in his approach to rhyming. This is an album that definitely deserves some consideration when next digging through the crates for a prime slice of quality assured Hip-Hop.

Music Mystro - Mystro - Lowlife Records

Mystro aka Mysdiggi, London's very own 'Strong-rhymer' returns with 'Music Mystro' the LP. This debut LP is everything a true Mystro fan would be hoping for. With production from the mighty Harry Love, Blufoot, Braintax and Rawdog you know it's going to be tight. Mystro gets started himself by delivering a tidy flow and numerous ill punchlines on 'Music Mystro'. Next track 'Nutrition – Work it out' sees Mr Braintax blessing the beats with some tight production, Mystro himself takes the beat and flips it, definitely a good collaboration team. The highlight of the LP for myself is 'YEAH' – Heavy production from the impressive Rawdog Productions and Mystro flows trademark style over the bumping beats – Shortee Blitz laces the finishing touches with tidy cuts. Lowlife Records and Mystro continue to release nothing but good music and 'Music Mystro the EP' is right there - Cop this ish! For info visit www.lowliferecords.co.uk

Dilated Peoples - Neighborhood Watch LP

Following the success of 'Expansion Team', Dilated Peoples crew are back with their new album 'Neighborhood Watch'. This 14 track deep release watches DP go about business as usual with Evidence, Iriscience and DJ Babu continuing with their distinctive hip hop style. Production duties come from Dilated peoples, Alchemist, Joey Chavez, Nucleus and Rob 'Reef' Tewlow along with guest vocal appearances from west coast heavy hitters Devin the dude, Defari, Phil Da Agony and Planet Asia. Kanye West also guests on 'This Way', which looks set to be a big Dilated tune – keep your eyes on this one! Another solid release from the Dilated team and be sure to check for forthcoming Tour dates scheduled for the summer.

Mr Complex - Glue / Scrape Your Back Out - 72 Records

Mr Complex is back with a gem of a 12". 'Glue' and 'Scrape your back out' produced by Beyond there's Huw and Tommy koi for 72 Records. 'Glue' is a self-confessed, "love song" from Complex with Biz Markie flexing his vocal cords on the chorus. 'Scrape your back out' follows the same formula with El Fudge on Chorus duties but this track is not necessarily a love song with the chorus stating "I want to thank you for letting me scrape your back out" nah mean! Heavy beats, tidy rhymes and good hooks! Purchase this now. More info check www.beyondthere.com

DJ Pager - The Product ft Ironbridge, Ill Psychosis etc

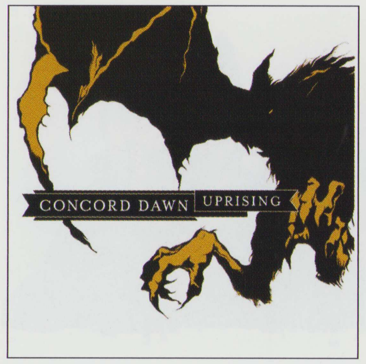
From the first kick DJ Pager's solo release 'The Product' displays many up and coming and established artists from the UK. Following their successful debut album 'Toilet Humour', Ironbridge join Pager and bounce around all over 'The Product' beat with tight back-to-back flows and their usual doses of humour. Ill Psychosis step up next on 'Medi-Evil' with their powerful punchlines and wicked lyrical skills. DJ Terror also joins in on the proceedings with some ill scratching, definitely a talent to look out for in the future. Finally Concentration Camp deal with Pagers filtered down beat 'Potent Poetry' with their typically deep and clever words of wisdom. Also be sure to check Danny Breaks cuts on this track – the mans got skills – Trust! For info check www.smokingmic.com or djpager@hotmail.com

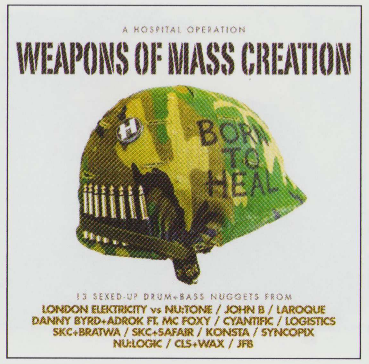
Pete Rock ft Grap Luva - Collectors Item - Up Above Recs

Pete Rock is a bad man, period. Side A of the Collectors item 12 " on Up Above Records is a classic piece of PR. A soulful beat with some chunky raw drums and tight bassline to match, what else do you expect from him hey! Grap Luva flows how he should over his brother's beats with assistance from Kev Brown on the chorus hook. 'Blindsided' is my personal favourite here a head-nodding bass driven beat perfect for late night headphone action, featuring The Kozmonautz and LMNO from Visionaries who ride very smoothly indeed over the Soul Brother No 1' music. The chorus is executed perfectly with tight cuts from DJ Rhettmatic - "We give you that, infact we give you what you lack" …Ya heard!!! Check info@upabove.com for more!

Def Jux Presents 3 (Various Artists) - Def Jux Records

This NY based label has a wide reach across America and connections throughout the Hip Hop sphere too numerous to mention. So to dispense with the lengthy recap this LP features tunes from a range of artist's like Murs, El-p and Rob Sonic although the main thing that you want to know is does it deliver? Yes in my opinion the beats are well produced and the lyrical content is varied and raw to say the least. If you're familiar with some of the artists featured on there you will know the quality of music to expect. There's some real heavy tunes on here especially if you appreciate raw Hip-Hop that isn't afraid to push the boundaries. Def Jux 2 was a hard act to follow and now this 3rd release has set the standard yet again for number 4 and beyond. If you're a fan already you not be disappointed and if you're not, prepare yourself for some impacting Hip-Hop.





drum & bass

➲ concord dawn - uprising

uprising 8

The New Zealand based duo have been going from strength to strength over the past 12 months and now they've put together a 12 track album featuring released and as of yet unreleased material.

The LP kicks off with the track that arguably put them on the drum n bass map, "Morning Light" with it's tearing reeces and haunting vocals. Other tracks of note are the rebel-rousing "Don't Tell Me", the dancefloor-friendly "Horror Show" and "Ninja", a track featured on Andy C's huge "Nightlife" mix CD. All in all a good package, however some of the unreleased tracks are a bit "filler" leaving few surprises amongst the unreleased material.

➲ remarc - unreleased dubs 94/96

planet mu 7

Remarc's "come-back" continues with another selection of his work from the golden age of jungle, 1994-1996. This time it's tracks that never saw full release for one reason or another and in case you didn't know, Remarc likes the Amen break. REALLY likes it and to be fair he's very skilled in manipulating it. Tracks of note here including his reworking of Prizna's classic "Fire" featuring Demolition Man on vocals, a VIP mix of "Ricky" and the vocal & dub versions of "Bad No Bloodclart".

➲ bingo sessions 1 - friction/zinc

bingo beats 9

Well, this is a treat! Two of the scene's finest DJs rolling out 47 of the freshest tunes at the moment. More dubs than you can wave a stick at, including the huge "Odyssey" by Drumsound & Bassline Smith, Frenzic & Friction's excellent reworking of Jo's classic "R-Type" and Twisted Individual's re-work of JBs "World Of Music". All styles are covered here with with soulful tracks from D.Kay, dark nastiness from Tech Itch, choppage workouts from Breakage and straight jump-up from the man himself, DJ Zinc. Mixing is tight as expected and there's plenty of teases going on to keep you interested. Highly recommended!

➲ shy fx - fast lane

trouble on vinyl 8

Shy FX steps to the mighty Trouble On Vinyl for their next mix offering, with a mission to reflect the "state of drum n bass today". The track listings a good mix of current smashers and taste dubplates. It kicks off with the Dubster's powerful 'Ra' and as the name suggests it fly's through tracks at a rate of knots till it finishes on the heavy 'Number One'. Keeping on a dancefloor tip it rolls along, dropping down into some taste liquid numbers like Ill Logic & Raf's 'Could It Be' and the Marcus Intalex remix of 'Just a Vision' before smashing back in with heavy hitters like 'Bring It On' and the 'Cuban Linkz' Fresh remix. As you expect from a TOV and FX collaboration it's a tight rolling dancefloor mix that does what it says on the tin. All good.

➲ v/a - weapons of mass creation

hospital records 9

This eagerly awaited compilation touches down with little disappointment, and there'll be no-one topping themselves over how sexed up this dossier is! Hospital just can't seem to put a foot wrong at the moment, and a testament to that is the artists queuing up to feature on the label. Laroque's sublime 'Goldfinger' stands out, and has been receiving a lot of attention recently. There's so many flowing melodies crammed into this album that it makes it hard to do it justice in a short review. Syncopix's 'Happy Happy, Joy Joy' is a tidy little number with a wicked use of strings. The sampler 'Free My Soul' is another quality piece that reflects the versatility of the label. Konsta's an artist who I've got a lot of time for, and his swing beat offering on the album does himself justice. Nu:Tones re-rub of London Electricity's 'Fast Soul Music' is a quality polished piece that does the original proud. 'Weapons Of Mass Creation' is a quality album and does a wicked job to reflect the strength of the label that London Electricity's head has set up.

➲ v/a - skool of hard knocks

renegade hardware 8

Hardware started feeling left out when it heard TOV had a mix on its way, so replied with this heavy compilation. 'Skool Of Hard Knocks' is rolling out across the country with a tour and vinyl realise as well. The vinyl's gonna be a 5 pack piece that we haven't seen the likes of from RH since the colossal 'Aftermath' album. BC UK jump onboard to do the work on the ones and two's, and as always they do a tight and heavy job. The tracklisting is full of the grimey filth that we know and love from Hardware, opening with Drumsound & Smith's growling 'Bandsaw' which features on the vinyl, as well as Universal Project's wicked 'Comin' Through' which rolls in swiftly. Other dancefloor bombs like The Militia's 'War Cry' and 'Unreal' from Concord Dawn and Illskillz feature on the plastic. There's some tasty dubs on the mix that won't be hitting the shops for a while, like the Chase & Status dutty remix of the classic '20/20' or Universal Project's 'Ultra Violence'. With 25 heavy hitters on this mix album you've gotta have a look yourself to appreciate the amount of artists who have featured on the long standing label. Those of you who like it hard won't be disappointed.

➲ v/a - highly emotif

emotif 6

This ever-developing label has been building its rep with some excellent releases recently. Responsible for the rise of artists like Ill Logic & Raf, Sketch & Code and Rascal & Klone it's clear that the Emotif crew have a keen A&R ear. This low-price mix features the finest Emotif cuts from past and present mixed by Sketch & Code and featuring the vocal talents of MC Co Gee. Highlights include Ill Logic & Raf's remix of Elisabeth Troy's 'Forever Young' with its killa intro and bongo-led drum loops. Sappo's 'Stand Bold' and Silver's 'Sound Control' provide the Manchester connection, and Hospital's golden boys Social Security bring the funk in 'Tom & Jerry'. Plenty of fresh tracks from Sketch & Code as well as a tight mix make this a nice little package, at an affordable price.

➲ v/a - studio x2

good looking 8

After a period of releases that didn't turn many heads, Good Looking has reaffirmed its reputation for unmistakable music of the highest calibre in the past year, bringing us a wealth of new music from some excellent new producers. This compilation takes us through fresh tracks from some of the labels finest, and includes some excellent remixes from stalwarts like John B, Carlito and Danny C. Standout tracks include J Laze's 'Virtual Realmz' with its big, rolling sub and heavenly vox hooks, Kymera's offering ('Following Forward') and Greenfly's hypnotizing, funk-fuelled 'Gulfstream'. After the success of their recent 12" 'Still Doin It', Vice Versa return with two more killers including 'Trust'. Credible new artists like Artificial Intelligence and Commix make their debut on the label with some quality remixes, once again proving that Good Looking is no longer a closed shop. If this is the future of this legendary imprint, we can rest assured that we're in safe hands for the next level in the progression.

➲ v/a - 720 revolutions pt 1

720 degrees 7

For consistently groundbreaking and original drum & bass, you don't need to look much further than Blame's imprint. Conceived in '97 under the Good Looking umbrella, 720 is now totally independent and is thriving with a new-found vigour and more dancefloor-orientated sound. This CD is a little taster of what the label has to offer in 2004, with the majority of tracks coming from Blame himself, including his KOTP project with The Pedge.

The vibe of the CD is futuristic, hard beat-driven dancefloor material, with a tech-slant and a touch of many different influences, including detroit-techno (check 'Hologram') and some Eastern vibes on 'Cairo'. Every track here provides plenty of depth and imagination-fuel, so there is no chance of getting bored of the sound. Blame's mix is naturally seamless and nicely structured, and watch out for killer tracks like K.O.T.P's 'Future', Blame's 'Citadel' and 'Rattlesnake'. Many people are still under the misconception that Blame is a mellow producer, but its time to set the record straight and this budget-price CD will no doubt turn some heads!

➲ v/a - what price will you pay?

commercial suicide 8

Klute's imprint has built a release schedule that any label would be proud of, creating a sound that is immediately recognisable yet always different. This CD brings us a showcase of releases past and present, including some beauties from Klute himself, Calibre and Amit to name a few. Kicking off with Break's 'Positive/Negative' this mix represents all the different flavours we've come to expect from CS, with plenty of deep rollers (check Klute's remix of Nautilus' 'Blueberry'), as well as some hefty dancefloor attacks like Baron's 'Ransom'. 'What We Want' is another sub-heavy, amen charged killer from Calibre and shining new talent TC1 comes through with a tight remix of A.I.'s 'Soul Good' towards the end. There are no weak tracks on this compilation, and we could never expect any less from this label who provide an across the board selection of the finest quality beats.

➲ big bud - producer vol 7

good looking 8

Big Bud has long been one of the pioneers of atmospheric drum & bass, from his early releases on Creative Source to his last LP on Good Looking, fusing influences from soul, dub and reggae with his love for breakbeat. Many underestimate this man's contribution to the scene and his influence on the music we hear today from the likes of Calibre, MIST and many other producers out there. This double CD takes us through a selection of Big Bud's finest moments, focussing more on the downbeat excursions to start with, from the dubbed-out "Runaway" to the 70's spatial funk of "Distant Space". I would have liked to see some more of Bud's D&B productions represented, as that is what he is known for. However, the gems are still there with "Emotionography" remaining one of the defining moments in his career with its ethereal pads and haunting flute melody riding over the perfectly crafted bass hook. "Indian Summer" is another shining example of his vision as a producer creating a warmth and perfect space around his beats and melodies. If you aren't familiar with Big Bud then this is certainly a must, although I would seek out some more of the drum & bass releases as well if you want the full picture.

➲ black sun emp - driving insane

bse recordings 8

The opening track 'Arakis' is a wicked dancefloor number with a healthy usuage of trancey synths that keep the tune on a twisted sinister vibe that BSE are renowned for. 'Don't You' is a dark roller with intricate beats and a element of funk that reminds of previous BSE tracks like 'The Rat'. 'Breach' is another deep rolling piece with a thick melody and high energy showing the amount of different influences that effects the trio in the studio. The album sees two remix's by outside artists. One, from SKC and Chris SU on the 'B'Negtive' track and the other courtesy of 'Kemal' on 'The Rat'. 'B'Negative' is dirty tech laced roller that switches beat patterns smoothly and keeps a lot of the original vibes. Kemal's re-rub moves along nicely, with the funk of the original maintained, and a drawn out atmospheric breakdown. The title track 'Driving Insane' is the standout with a heavy drop into some sick tearout reece. The tune twists and turns smoothly giving some wicked drops, alongside a hip hop sample and acidic tops. The last track 'Swipe' finishes things the way it started, another dark funky roller with a grimey bass line! If you're a fan of Black Sun Empire you won't be disappointed, its no wonder that Friction, Trace and Ed Rush, amongst others, have been giving this album the play it deserves.

eclectic

➲ 4 hero - the remix album

raw canvas 9

4 Hero have managed to span over a decade of UK dance music, from their early days running Reinforced to their genre-defying "Creating Patterns" LP and spearheading of the broken beat scene. Add to this a vast list of productions and remixes under numerous guises and you have a pair of the most illustrious, pioneering producers on British shores. This LP is a double CD affair featuring a selection of 4hero remixes of other artist's tracks, with the second CD providing the best remixes of 4Hero originals. Seminal pieces of music like Marc & Dego's reworking of Nuyorican Soul's "Black Gold Of The Sun" and Goldie's "Innercity Life" illustrate the forward thinking that has always been present in their productions. The intrinsic heart of 4Hero's ethic has always been about ignoring trends and just making music that sounds good, and this shines in all of these tracks. CD 2 features remixes from the likes of Bugz In The Attic, Masters At Work and DJ Spinna along with MIST's remixes of "9 by 9" and "Better Place". This is an essential collection of some of the most groundbreaking and original remixes from dance music's greatest innovators. This LP will be launching 4Hero's new label Raw Canvass, which will be an exclusive platform for 4Hero's own productions.

➲ fragile state - voices from...

bar de lune 9

Fragile State are Zero 7 tour keyboardist Neil Cowley, and Ben Mynott - DJ and Blues and Soul journo, return with the follow up to 2002 excellent 'The Facts and the Dreams' a journey into blues and jazz and electronic downtempo. The first 2 tracks are a bit dull but the duo find life in 'New Bassa' and 'Cleo' with its folky aspect, and '600 Bliss' which sounds similar to the previous album, for that bluesy freestyle feel. 'Paper Smile' is chilled out lushness and, whereas the reprise 'Paper Tiger' has a bit more bite to it. 'Train Time' grows on you with its cyberwaltz take on things. The highlight is 'Overcurrent' a relaxed breakbeat with those deep keys, and breathy chants – this is Jazzy loungecore deluxe. Remixes of this could go very far. Another well crafted outing from this duo, but sadly less good than their debut.

➲ oxia - 24 heures

goodlife / pias 7

Olivier Raymond is Oxia, one of France's leading techno producers. From the electro based thumper 'Le Temps' he starts well, and into the hi octane if 'Reflexion' and the tribal 'Intuition'. 'TNN' uses some hefty Detroit strings. Excellent. 'Flashback' takes us back to the days of techno rave, and back into dark electro in 'Never Forget'. 'Hasard' takes us into a breathtaking uplifting tech soundscape.

'Different way' is some off kilter beats, and '6for1' fails to cut it, but back in with tribal trance in 'The Night' and the 'House Nation' rerub is a bit average. If you like the techno of old, this is definitely worth a check.

➲ russ gabriel - other side vol 1

emoticon records

Russ Gabriel, owner of the defunct techno imprint Ferox crafts some gems after last years' excellent diverse album, 'Into The Unknown'. The hard techy 'Subliminal Dreams' kicks us off in mid tempo, then into the brilliant 'God Is The Moment' a sax fuelled awesomely layered textured, soulful jazz boogie. Gabriel has matured for the better…

'Tisch Tennis' is an electro fest wheras 'My New Room' is some hectic paced future soul, 'Ode to Ade' takes you into techno of old tribal kick drum and subs, warped keys and then a cello – that all melt beautifully on your sonic palate. 'Jazz in the Funk' is the only let down, just feels a bit too over engineered to sound retro. The finale is 'Brela' a downbeat keyed strings affair, akin to Brian Eno, beautifully worked. Highly recommended, another top album by this highly underrated Brit.

➲ v/a - abstract afro journey

nite grooves / king street

Chicagan Deep House maestro Ron Trent steps up for this new US mix series. The afro element intrinsically fused to house, but never clumsily.

Stand outs include 'Ebony Angel' by Trent as USG, 8 minutes of minimal vocal deepness, Alton Miller's chilled jazz 'Love Inside' and 'Congo Deep' by Mateo and Matos is aptly titled. Some Femi Kuti styled beats resonate in 'Nigerian Travels' by Kerri Chandler, and the afrotastic 'Ye Yo Ma' flicked beats, and Trent's own 90 second beats moulage does well too. Ananda Project's 'I Hear You Dreaming' is overly sweet, Romatt's 'Lets be Free' OD's on guitar, and the pace drops off precipitously with 'Cascades of Colour' by Wamdue Project. All in all, a sophisticated ride into an solid afro-electronic beatscape.

➲ v/a - heavyweight soundclash

chillifunk

The ubiquitous Phil Asher mixes up some of Chillifunk's recent offerings, and comes out trumps. 'Soulful music for funky people' is head honcho Bob Jones motto, which is upheld. 13 tracks – from the smooth jazz beat of 'Unfinished Business' by Notenshun, to the disco gilded 'Many Nights' by Vaceo Dino and Terry's 'Summertime Blues' is relaxed, but kiwi sax-star Nathan Haines 'Squire for Hire' gets a bland Asher remix.

Pighi's 'Trumpeetha' fairs less well, T.Kolai's 'Zouk' gets a dub and peaktime mix by Asher, which lack the others groove. Interns featuring Snowboy is good real jazz, and ends on the brilliant Haines cut 'Right by your side with Vanessa Freeman on vocals with Marcus Begg. Bob Jones's imprint goes from strength to strength and Asher's plan for world domination continues.

words: Laurent Fintoni
photo: c/o Fabric

In the world of DJing there aren't many things DJ Spinbad hasn't done. His name became known throughout the 90's for many reasons and he is now one of the most revered and appreciated hiphop DJs worldwide. I recently had the chance to sit down with the man and pick his brains about his history, politics of the business, his work and the most bootlegged tapes in history.

Spinbad first got hooked on the turntables when he was growing up in the 80's, learning to beatmatch on his step-brother's friend tables. Following this he started making pause tapes and became inspired by the work of local DJs as well as Jazzy Jeff, whom he credits as the inspiration for wanting to turn this new found hobby into a living. When he finally got his first decks he recalls trying to imitate what Jeff was doing but "of course the turntables were belt drive and they would be all over the place!"

Spinbad established himself on the DJ scene in the 90's in many ways. He was one of the first east coast DJ to implement in his work the new technical styles that had been pioneered by such west coast luminaries as Q-Bert, Mix Master Mike and Babu. Him and his partner, Revolution, would get together and session, exchanging tricks and learning new patterns, something which he has always made a point of displaying in his live sets and countless mixtapes. Which were another way in which Spinbad established himself on the scene. Referred to by many fans and DJs alike as one of the true mixtape kings, over the years Spinbad has put out some of the most well known and appreciated tapes, ranging from standard fare hiphop tapes, to blend tapes, classic breaks compilations and the one and only 80's megamix, aka 'Spinbad: Rocks the Casbah'. When asked about the 80's mixtapes he explains that it all started out as a bit of a joke because "a lot of the tapes that were coming out of New York at the time, were the Clue type of tapes, where things weren't mixed together, there was no blending or scratching and they just shouted over the top. Basically they had only exclusive songs on DAT and they shouted over them. And I hated it, I couldn't stand it and I wanted to do something that those people would absolutely despise. So I picked up the corniest 80's music that I grew up loving, and I cut these up and scratched them just to see what I could do with it. And I did 15 minutes of it and I brought it to Jazzy Jeff's studio, and told him to check it out, and he loved it. He was really feeling it and I was like 'are you serious? I only did it as a joke'. And he said 'No man you need to finish it, people are gonna love this'. So I went back to finish them, and he kept on calling me up asking if I had finished it and pushing me to do it. I pretty much did it for him and that's how it came together." Admittedly he was even more surprised of their popularity and the way in which they spread like wildfire. He gave a bunch to Fatbeats in NY, and they somehow ended up all over the world, spreading his fame. They have now reached a timeless status being often referred to as the most bootlegged tapes of all time.

Spinbad has a style all his own when it comes to mixtapes. As he explains "part of it is that I always try to incorporate turntablism aspects to my tapes, with a good dose of scratching and juggling. It's not all multi-tracking, all the scratches are done in real time, and I'm into the layering aspect of using the multitrack."

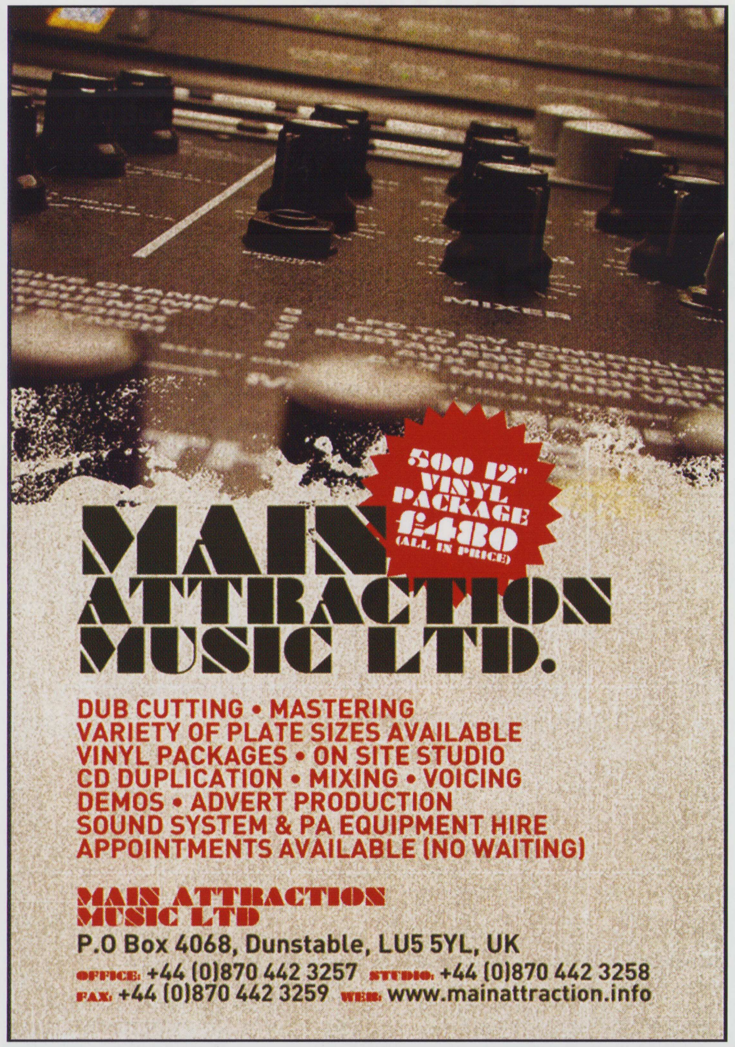
Last but by no means least, Spinbad is also known as the man who was Moby and Dido's tour DJ and who before that opened for the Back Street Boys on one of their tours. Not the type of activity one would associate with a hiphop DJ, but something that was an obvious result of Spinbad's talent and growing notoriety. These gigs lasted for a few years and led him to more opportunities including DJing on famous American talk shows such as Jay Leno and David Letterman. He auditioned to do a scratch solo on the Conan O'Brian show with Moby and from there on "things went a bit crazy". He has fond memories of his time touring with the stars but it started to affect his personal goals. "I was touring for two and a half years, and everything that I'm trying to do comes to a halt at that point, and I'm supporting Moby or I'm Dido's DJ, and I just want to work on my productions and work on my career a bit more. And the touring thing is so hard as well, it takes a lot out of you."

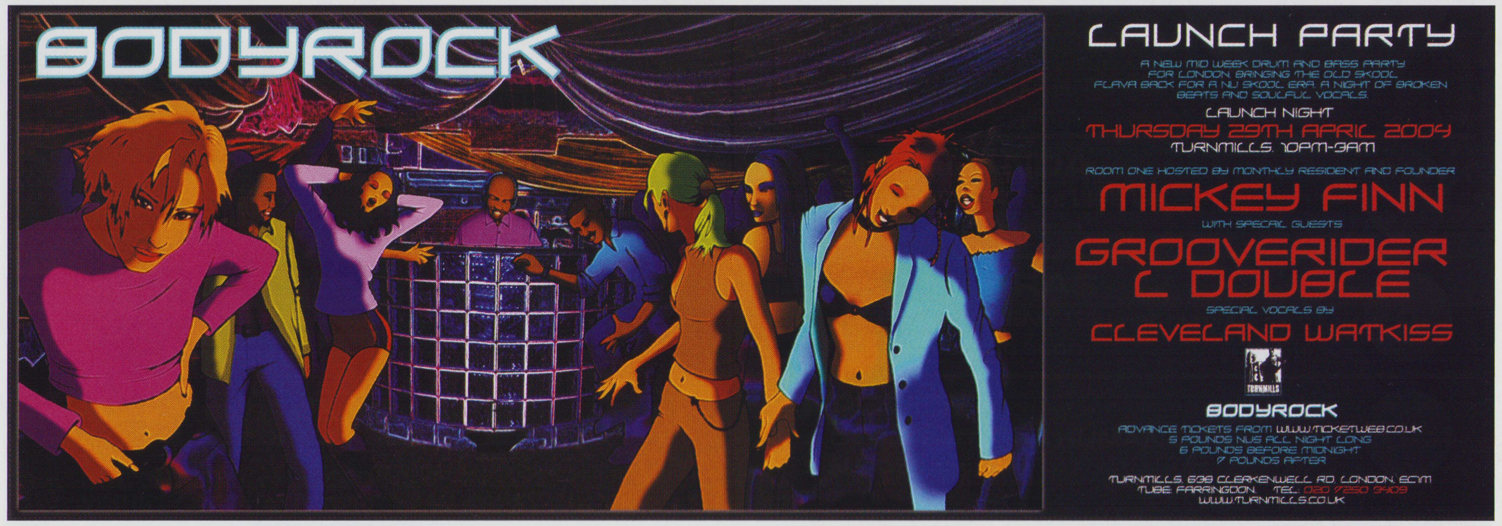
Following a few years of touring Spinbad settled back in New York and in 2002 started a new phase of his career: getting his own radio show on the big apple's airwaves.

After years of suffering the poor quality of radio shows and the ensuing even poorer exclusive tapes these shows spawned, Spinbad got signed to Power 105, first on a late night slot and since last June on a prized 8 o'clock slot. As with most of his work, Spinbad makes a point of being different and original, his show isn't just your average, as he prefers to let his skills do the talking. "My show is one of the only ones with blending and scratching on the air and that is different in itself to almost any radio show in NY. So I'm really getting a kick out of it and the way people respond to it, because you know radio in NY has been the same for ten years. Play a song, scream, cut the song out, play another one, shit gets boring quickly." Much like the mixtape game, radio has its fair share of politics and Spinbad has had the unfortunate opportunity to witness those first hand, but he doesn't let them affect him, choosing to rise above it all and provide an oasis of musical quality in a desert of dull musical similarity.

The last thing Spinbad hasn't really done yet is production. He admits to loving working in the studio something his hectic schedule for the last few years never allowed him much time to concentrate on. He has produced for some of his tapes, released some battle weapons but as of yet hasn't really entered the production arena on his own terms, something he hopes to do this year. "I have been working on some hip-hop tracks, with some local MCs as well as this guy from Philly called Baby Blak and Kardinal Offishal. I'm probably going to put out a compilation album with different artists on it. I love it, I just wish I had more time to do it, when I start making a beat I always want to take it further, but with the radio and my other work it can be hard to get away from it all and find time to just be on my own and work on production." He is confident that some of this production work will see the light of day soon, and with a pedigree like his we can be sure to expect some top quality head nod hiphop.

So there you have it, the man, the myth and the legend, one of the most versatile DJs comfortable in any genre and situation. And if you haven't already go get his 80's tapes, you won't be disappointed and for once you will be able to jam to it with your parents.





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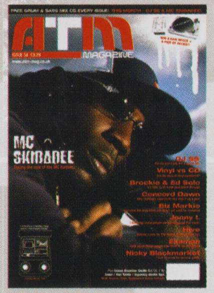

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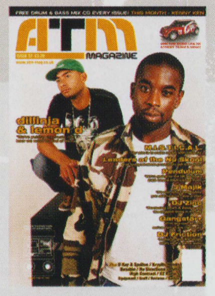

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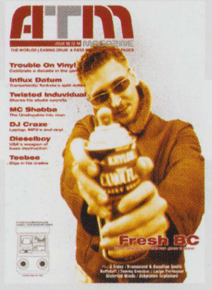

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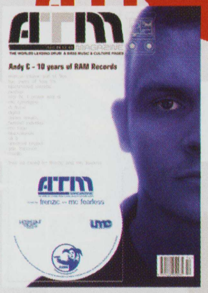

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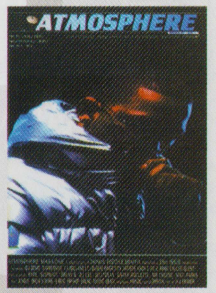

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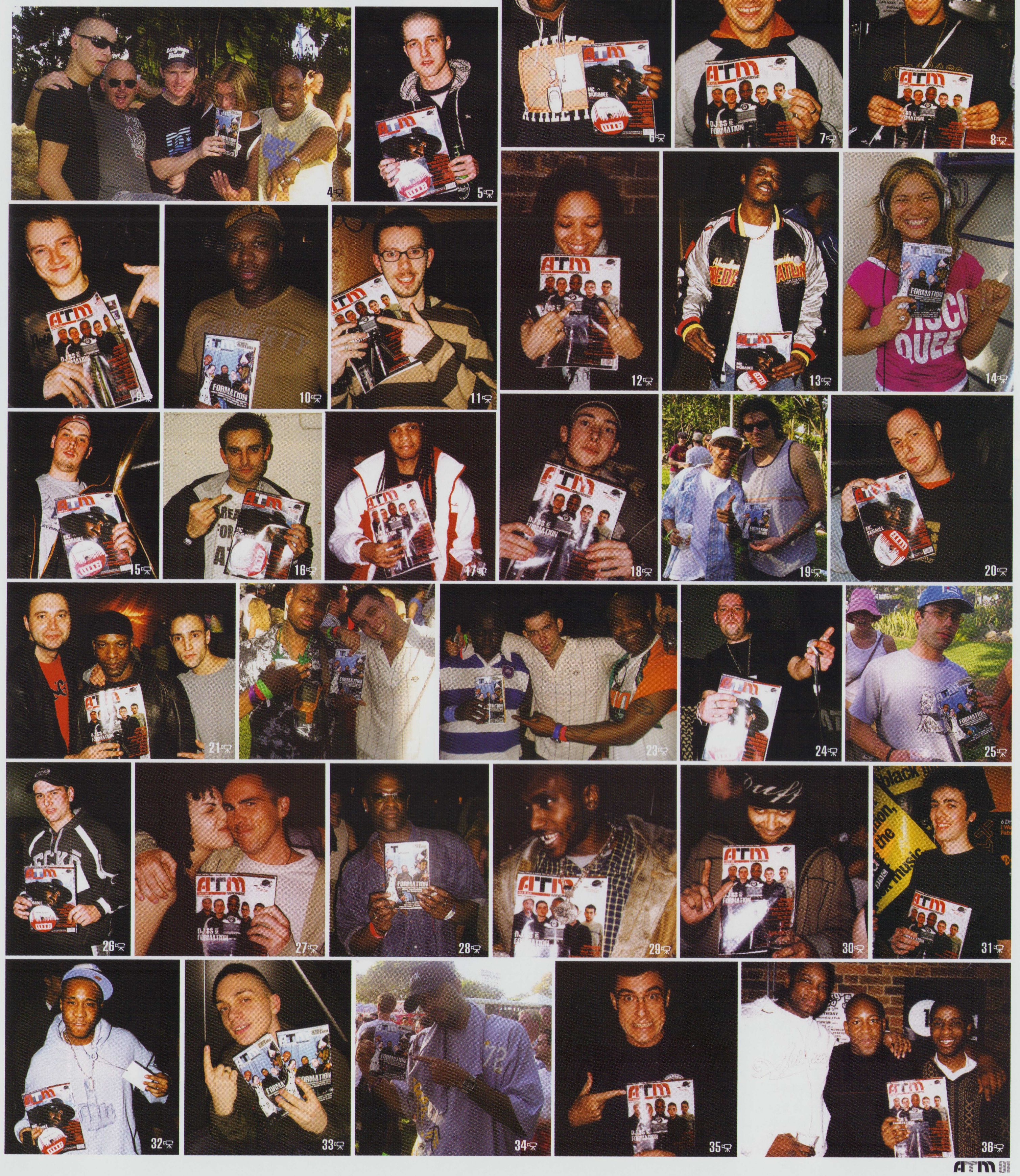

KILLA KELA

words: Laurent Fintoni
photo: Ella Cooper

We can all make noise with our mouth, but how many people can make music with theirs? Biz Markie did back in the 80's, Rahzel brought it to a whole other level in the 90's and now the UK's very own, Killa Kela, is making music for the new century. Kela started his career after sending a tape to Vadim who helped him out and took him on tour, and then the rest is as they say, history. Recognised today by many, as one of the best beatboxers, sorry multi-vocalist, in the world Kela has been working hard on his new album, as well as new material with his crew, Spit Kingdom, a new monthly residency at Herbal, and of course jammin' with Pharrel and Justin. We had the chance to catch up with him on the phone to find out where the music will come from in '04.

First off how was 2003 for you?
It was good man, loads of work, loads of different things happening on all fronts, loads of collaborations and shows and just keeping things going. It was definitely a good year for me and it's set up 2004 to be even bigger and better.

Since 'Permanent Marker' dropped and you first started making your name known on the scene, you have been getting more and more attention and props for your work. How does it feel now that you are starting to see things really blow up for you and your work?
Well you know, it's really all about being at the right place at the right time. After 'Permanent Marker', I used that as a platform to help launch more things, get to work with different people, going at it a 100 per cent and not looking back. It was just a question of running with the flow and letting other things come to me, like the media attention and stuff like that. 'Permanent Marker' did really well, it was a good album and a great first start, and it still sells every now and then, Jazz Fudge did a really good job on that one.

Tell us more about your recent D&B collaborations?
Yeah man, well I've worked with Zinc, Lemon D and the Jungle Drummer, who is now part of the Spit Kingdom crew as well. Also been working with the Mixologists, the thing is most of the stuff I do with D&B comes from my early work with the Heavies, and with Nicky Blackmarket. And from there people in the scene have always had an ear out for me and vice versa. There will definitely be some D&B tracks on the album, along with loads of different stuff, my usual look at music, using soundscapes and building on that. It's definitely going to be big.

You've always seamed like someone who doesn't limit yourself in the music and genre you cover?
Well that's because what I do is about opening my mind and trying to always broaden things, not stay limited. It's almost like what I do is human interest, you know? I was always lucky to be in the right place at the right time, when we were touring Europe I managed to set up a lot of good relationships with people. Then in the UK the D&B thing has always been there, it's such an important part of the musical culture in the UK and was so influential to me, like 2 step and all these other genres, that it's only normal that I take it in my work. At the end of the day when I do a show or something live, you know that it's something that can appeal to everyone, from little kids to your parents, and that's really what I try and keep doing.

And what about your work with Pharell and the Neptunes, can you tell us some more about that?
Yeah well at the start of last year, when they were in town doing their show, I went to the venue with the soundman and we hid in the sound booth basically, until they came out to do a sound check and then we kind of jumped them! And it worked, by the time the show was over, the following Monday they asked me to come into the studio, and we worked there and did some live sessions for Radio one as well. Then I went on tour with them in the States, in Seattle, and it all culminated with the gig in Brixton and doing a live bit with Justin and Pharell. And for me that was a really big thing you know, I really think that I am lucky to be where I am today.

Will you release any Spit Kingdom material this year?
Possibly, we've been in the studio working hard, the website is up and the new club night starts this month. So at the moment we are working on a compilation of stuff under Spit Kingdom, with collaborations as well and we still have the sound system that we try and tour when we can. Then my new album should be coming out between the summer and end of the year, with a new track called the 'Jaw Breaker' which will be out soon, to keep people hungry! That track features Jungle Drummer as well.

Is there anybody left you haven't worked with that you still would really like to collaborate with?
Well there was Tricky but I don't think that's going to happen anymore. I don't really want to overdo it on the collaboration front, don't want to dilute what I do by having too many fingers in too many pies. But there are definitely a few people left I really want to work with, like Pharaoh Monch, Busta Rhymes, Dizzee, fuck it even Lionel Ritchie would be great!

That would be some great stuff!
Yeah man taking it back to the old school, you know?

Didn't you play with Busta in the States?
Yeah well I was touring with him and I got a lot of respect for him, what he does is great but we haven't really had the chance to do anything properly.

And are you still working with Vadim?
Not really, Vadim was too busy with his new album after the last tour we did, which was nearly two years ago. I mean I will always be thankful to him for helping me out and giving me the chance to be a part of it, but after we came back from the last tour he wanted to try and incorporate more live instruments into the mix, and then he had his new album and I had my first album, and there just wasn't time. The thing is though, with what we are doing with Spit Kingdom, it follows straight on from that, you know? It's like after we decided that there wasn't enough time to work on new stuff, I thought that I'd try and have a go at it myself and try and carry on the same spirit in a new and different way, and so that's what we try to do with Spit Kingdom, we have DJs, MCs and vocalists and we try and break new ground, and keep that thing going.

Are you still a member of the Rock Steady Crew?
Yeah man!! That is something I'm going to carry with me all my life. It's always good, you know. I got in with them when I was 19 and now it just proves to me that I'm doing the right thing and I'm on the right track. It's like another platform for me, and when I first got in I was like "Rock Steady this, and Rock Steady that" and it's also such an important part of the foundation, that I can't ever let it go. It helps me push things forward.

Where are you going to be touring his year?
Well the first main thing is a tour with SS, Frenzic and Grooverider, and maybe Skiba as well. Trip, Skelektrik and me are joining them and helping to bring some vibes to the floor. We are doing the UK and then USA, Canada, New Zealand and some of Asia as well. Grooverider is doing most of the tour with us and SS is doing all the Australian and Asian dates as well. So we are just going to go and make it a good show for everyone and just spread the word, hit people up with stuff they aren't expecting. I mean I've been doing so many shows now that it's really become second nature to me, it's almost like a routine of sorts and so I gotta keep motivating myself and do different things.

Any last words?
Thanks to all the people who come to the shows and buy my stuff. Get yourselves down to the night at herbal, it's free and you won't be disappointed. And also check the site, killakela.com and big up all the guys at ATM.